UNDER THE VOLCANO

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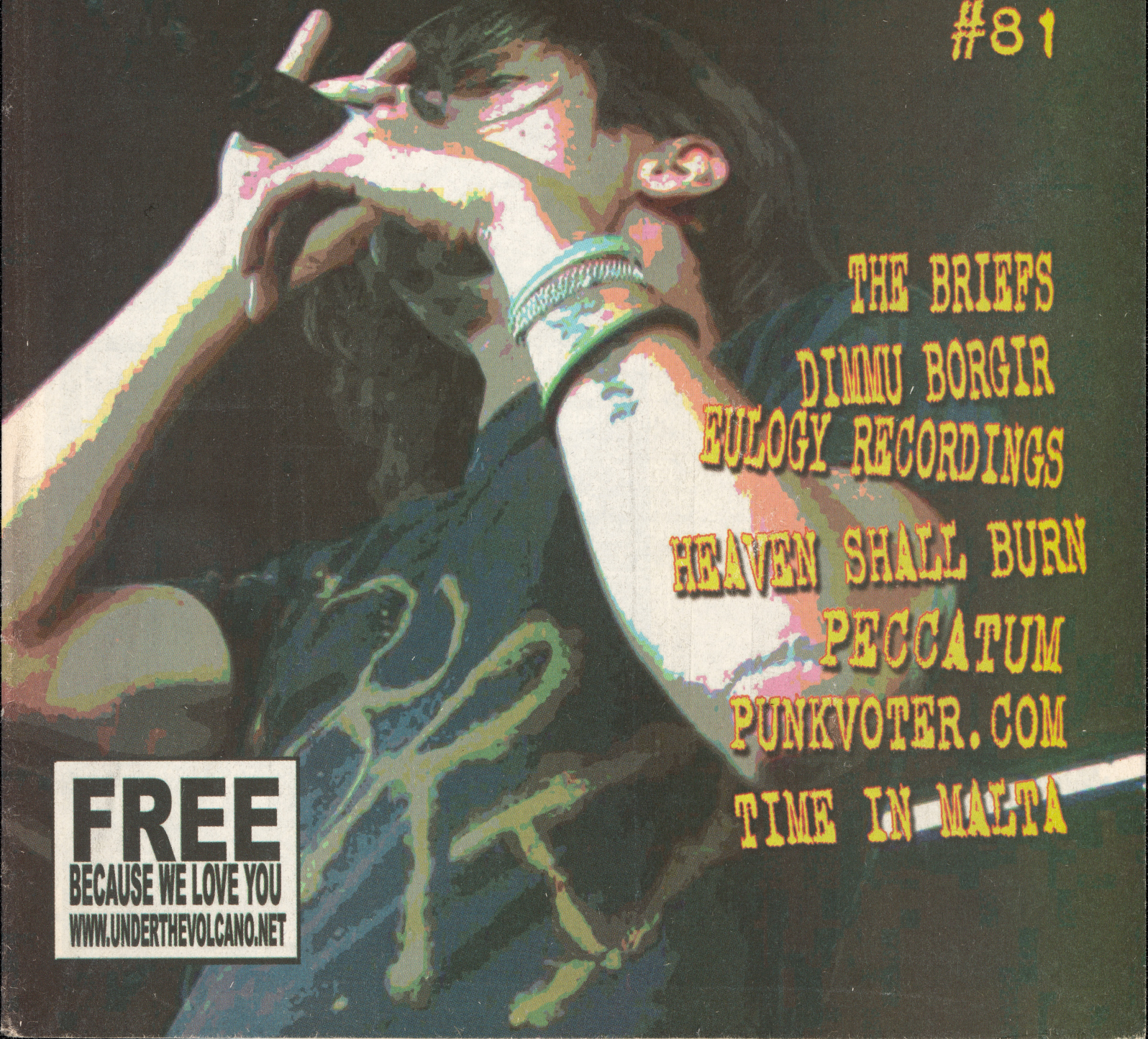
TAKING BACK SUNDAY

#81



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2. Make all checks payable to Under the Volcano, Inc.
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From the Editor Rich Black

I think it works something like this:

When a child is only a day old, a whole life-time is 24 hours long. After 48 hours, what seemed like a whole life-time yesterday is just cut in half.

Fast forward to 10 years later. One day in that child's existence now only occupies one 1/3,650 of his entire life-time so far. Days are getting shorter-occupying less "relative" time. In effect, time is moving faster. Allegedly, this somehow ties into Einstein's Theory of Relativity, but someone with a bigger brain than I needs to be on that.

Yeah, someone just had a birthday. I wonder who?

So basically, by the time a human is 80 years old, time is a screaming locomotive hurtling toward oblivion.

And at some point, we'll all be forced to take stock of things. And ask ourselves questions like, "Where did all the time go?" and "Was it worth it?" And make comments like, "Jeez, that seems like it happened only yesterday." And we'll all hope that we made the right decisions, hope that we made the world a better place, and hope that we didn't hurt anyone or ourselves too badly. And life will be bigger than any one of us, and sometimes it will really, really seem like a circle of just yesterdays...

But hey, if you're not comfortable sleeping with me, that's cool too.

(Gotcha, didn't I? I'm suuuuch a dick!)

WANNA SEND US AN INTERVIEW?

Under the Volcano is looking for high-quality interviews to publish. There is NO PAY involved. We like many genres of music, but Punk and Hardcore are generally what set our loins on fire, and we're ONLY interested in bands that have a CD available through national distributors. Email us first about your interview ideas. We'll require hearing the band first of course, and have some simple guidelines once you get the go-ahead. Remember, there are no guarantees—we're kind of dicks about the right "mix" of bands for a particular issue, and hafta REALLY like what a band is doing to run a feature. Please DON'T approach us about features on bands from Long Island, as we already have 'em covered.

INTERNSHIPS

Under the Volcano is always looking for bright, motivated, and slightly masochistic people to create and or/fill unrewarding, unglamourous, non-paying intern positions (we are NOT looking for writers) in exchange for college credit! English, Communications or Marketing majors are encouraged to apply, and you DON'T have to live on Long Island. If ya wanna get involved, email a proposal detailing STEP BY STEP ideas for new programs or projects (including how you intend to implement them) or however else you'd like to contribute to boss@underthevolcano.net with "INTERNS" in the subject header. Please also include a 300 word statement explaining WHY ya wanna work with *Under the Volcano*, along with your contact info.

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Columns

Some dumbass tried to jack a $325 cell phone from my job. He more or less let me know what he was going to do. He also knew I was tailing him since well... I've never sold any of these phones before; most people like the cell phones you get for free, but buying a six month service from one provider or another. Anyway, my homeboy would be thief thought he was going to score this prize by going into a pooping stall, laying some goods while gaining some others. Nuh-uh!

Groovy enters the b-room, takes a piss, washes his hands (with soap, which is apparently a real rarity in New York these days—guys washing their hands, not **me** washing them) and then yells: "SO WHAT'S GOING ON WITH MY PHONE, MAN?"

A startled voice states, "Uh... I dunno know what ya talking about man, I'm trying to take a dump.

"I'm TALKING ABOUT MY TELEPHONE. GIMME MY PHONE, OR ELSE YOU'RE GONNA BE IN THERE ALL DAY!""Uh.... I don't got your phone, man. I put it back on the shelf."

"I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOU IN EVERY AISLE. NOW YOU SOMEHOW PUT THAT PHONE ON THE RACK WITHOUT ME SEEING YOU?.... pause..... GIMME MY PHONE, MUTHAFUCKER!"

"Err... I ain't got your phone, man! Now let me take a shit... puh-leeze!" The voice sounds really startled now.

"OH, OKAY MAN," I reply in the most pleasant voice I can drum up. I then head towards the bathroom door, open it, and make it squeak like I left. I hear the kid trying to clip the phone package open really fast.

I **SLAM** into his stall: "GIMME THAT PHONE OR I'M GONNA DROWN YOU IN THAT SHIT! I'M NOT PLAYING WITH YOU MAN. GIMME THAT PHONE!"

Meekly, he asks, "If I give you the phone, you promise not to call the police?""I PROMISE I WON'T BREAK YOUR HANDS, THAT'S ALL. NOW GIVE ME THE FUCKING PHONE!"Magically, the package slides out from underneath the stall.

Now here's the second part of the tale, where Groovy approaches the would be thug's partner in crime. He's busy playing *Fight Night* on one of the PS-II consoles that the store provides the "customers" with. He's playing but looking left and right, waiting for his buddy. So I stand about five feet from him, cross my arms, and look directly into his eyes. He looks left, right, then left again. Suddenly he realizes I'm watching him. Now he tries to stare rather intensely at the game like he's deeply involved. So I just stare at him.

He breaks from his stare and looks at me, but tries to quickly move back to the screen like he **hadn't** looked at me. Droog mode kicks in."Hey man, your friend isn't going to be coming back here anytime soon.""Wuh? I didn't know that guy. I uh... we just met over here, man. I don't know what you're talking about.""You just met here, and started to play video games together? You kidding me?" I just shake my head.

"Yeah, that's how you meets peoples." **His** phrasing, not mine."That's how you meets peoples? Where the fuck does this happen man? Are you kidding me?""Yeah, that's how you meets peoples.""That sounds really gay if you ask me."This stirs him up "Wuh... what you saying? You saying I'm gay?"

I laugh. "No, **this** is what I'm saying: you're fucking friend jetted man. He didn't get the phone. I'm saying you're full of shit, and you know what? I don't need your crew stinking my place up. You know what I mean?"

He goes back to saying, "I dunno that guy man, I'm telling you. Why don't you listen?""Well why did he tell me to tell you that you have to meet him outside? He'll wait since he's not allowed in the store anymore.""Uh I don't know.. uh...."

We've got a rocket scientist here."But you guys **aren't** gay? I dunno, man... look, get the fuck out of the store!"

He curses and throws a whole tirade, thus forcing me to escort him through the store. The closer he is to customers the louder and tougher he's trying to sound. So I knock the wind out of his sails...

"Dude, I live next door to a crackhouse. I deal with bigger badasses than you every day of the week. So get out of my face."

Then, to show off to his growing audience, her says, "You're lucky I don't snuff you out."I get into his face, and yell "WHAT?" my fists clenched.

Hoody throws a fake punch expecting me to flinch.. he sees my eyes are locked into his and my arms are cocked. I don't move a millimeter. I don't budge. Then you can see he's like... *Shit, what do I do now*?

One of my managers steps over to him, "Why you getting into my employee's face?""He's throwing me out of the store for no reason."

"No, the reason is we have the cops coming down, and they're gonna be looking for you and your friend. So he's helping you out. So get out of here before they come."

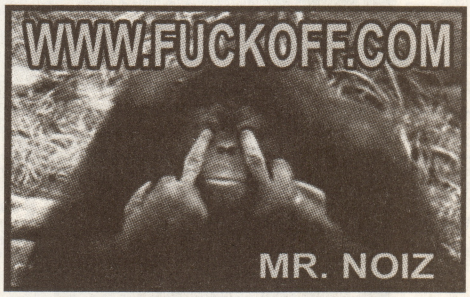
He starts babbling about me, and denies getting in my face. My manager laughs, "I just saw you get in his face. You did this—" and he fakes a punch toward the kid. Hoody flinches and jumps back a foot—SUCKER!

The whole event was absurd. Me acting like a cop! Management is thanking me—yes, **me**—for doing a good job. If you ever read my column even only partly through, you realize I **hate** my job. And Shawn Clap even witnessed some of the event.

I wanted to start this story with, "Take my life please!" But, if that were the case, this column would've been both clever **and** interesting.

As Shawn Clap would say, "It stank like amateur hour."

On a final note, so long, Ronnie, and thanks for inspiring some good Punk Rock. You'll be missed.



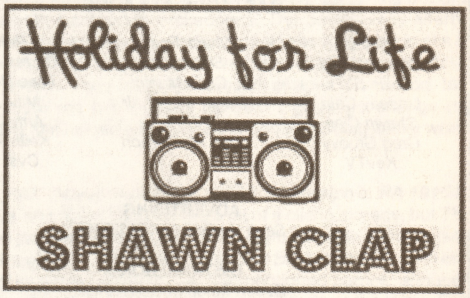
Thinking back, I just realized that Mr. Black and I met over 10 years ago, and I've been writing for *Under the Volcano* about as long. Just think... I knew Rich before he moved into his present underground lair. And it took me years of bugging him till I finally got a column—though I think he's the only one who reads it, and only because he has to edit it. Either way, I'm **so** glad the *UTV* website is updated with a new look and feel, check it out at www.underthevolcano.net

On to other things here... I've been getting silly with the amount of celebrity news and life-probing that is all over the news, but you have to love inter-nerds for spreading all things that celebs (and so-called celebrities) don't want you to see. Check out www.sxxxy.org, aka *News For Perverts*, and you'll probably see the latest sex video victim. I just found the site and think it's great—maybe because I'm a pervert. Another page similar to this one is www.ookiine.com, which isn't as good as the first link, but still enjoyable.

www.dogster.com is doing for canines what www.friendster.com and www.myspace.com are doing for people meeting. I'm not sure how many dogs are humping because of this site, but from what I hear a LOT of people are meeting and humping through the people sites. But if you want to check out my dog, look up Haddie on dogster and drop me a line.

Recently I was introduced to the music of Clair De Lune. Check the out at www.cldmusic.com. I think I reviewed them in this issue, so go look it up. Also, check out Battles [www.bttls.com], which features ex-Helmet and current Tomahawk drummer John Stainer as well as ex-Don Cab guitarist Ian Williams. I'm not sure what they sound like, as I'm still waiting to hear them, I guess as soon as they fix the link on their website or when they have something there.

And for those of you who miss those X10 pop up ads, here's a whole collection of them: http://british.nerp.net/commentary/x10ads.html. Enjoy!



Fleetwood Mac wanted nothing more than to keep me a virgin. Forever. Oh, they won't mention it in their interviews and you could strain your eyes reading the liner notes of *Rumors* and there's not a word of it **there**, either. But take it from me, their sole purpose was to keep the Young Shawn Clap perpetually unlaid.

Perhaps, it wasn't *entirely* their fault. It was the summer of 1989, a bad year. I worked in the junkyard with Tommy and Marky. They were a few years older than me, on the other side of 18. They had long hair and were able to buy beer at the gas station.

"Man," I thought, " those grease monkeys must get laid every night".

I was at that point, the point in a young man's life, when you realize that rubbing it under the covers just ain't good enough any more. But I needed guidance. There must be some trick, some password or handshake that I didn't know about. I needed wise words.

So I turned to a couple of 18 year-old dirtbags.

"Yeah, so all I wanted to do was pound the bacon strips," Tommy said, "but she just wanted to play her invisible banjo."

"What a cock tease," Marky complained.

"Yeah," I chimed in.

"Some chicks just don't know what they want," Tommy said.

"Yeah, and some chicks wanna doggy-style," Marky began, "but then get mad if you stick your thumb up their ass."

We were taking the windshield out of a '81 Buick. I paid close attention to the conversation, taking mental notes. Bacon strips. Invisible banjo. Thumb up the ass. How could I trick a girl into letting me do this? More importantly, who could I trick?

Heather Duran was out of the question. She was way too popular. But there was Kelly Ripken. Kelly wasn't a cheerleader. She didn't have the nicest clothes or the coolest friends. She had neither perfect teeth nor stylish hair. She was average. More importantly, she was obtainable. We were in the same summer school class....until I was expelled. But if only I had some more sound advice.

"The one thing I know about chicks," Tommy said, " is they go crazy if you choke them when you're doin' it."

"Dude, chicks love that," Marky exclaimed, "and they love doing it to Fleetwood Mac."

"Something about Stevie Nicks' voice," Tommy explained, " brings out the animal in them."

Now I was armed with all the information I would ever need to know about women. I was set to become the World's Greatest Lover. I sat in front of the junior high school and waited for Kelly Ripken's summer school class to end. I had a small boombox, with a Fleetwood Mac mix tape.

Around noon students came rushing out of the doors into the warm July day. Kelly walked slow, burdened by a heavy bookbag. I walked up to her.

"Hi Kelly."

She looked at me quizzically.

"Shawn... Shawn from class," I told her.

"Oh. Hey."

"Say, let me carry that bag for you."

"No, I'm okay."

"Here," I said, and grabbed the bag from her.

"It's **really** okay," she said.

"I'm walking the same way anyway."

We walked, but did not speak. I went over my mental notes. Bacon strips, invisible banjo, thumb up the ass. We cut across the field, towards the bleachers.

"Say, this is heavy," I said, "Let's take a break over there."

"I have to get home."

"Just for a minute, just a little break."

She went to sit on a bleacher seat.

"No," I said, "let's sit under the bleachers."

She looked at me funny.

"Y'know, in the shade."

We went under the bleachers and sat on the dirt. I pressed play on the boombox. "Total Eclipse of the Heart" played gently through the speakers. Any moment now, I would become a man. The song ended, another came on. Nothing.

"Are you ready?" Kelly asked.

"Oh yeah," I said in a deep sultry voice.

She got up. She meant ready to leave.

"Why don't we wait a little longer?" I asked.

"Look, it was real nice for you to carry my books, but I have to go."

She went to grab her bookbag. Her mouth seemed real close to mine.

"This is it," I thought, "she's gonna kiss me, we're gonna do it!"

I was ready to teach her everything I knew about making love. Everything Marky and Tommy told me. I grabbed her by the throat and started choking her like she'd never been choked before. My fingers dug deep into that slender neck, shaking her by the thorax.

Marky and Tommy were right. She went fucking crazy. Biting and punching and screaming. You would have thought someone was being murdered under those bleachers. She ran from there and didn't stop until she was out of sight. Apparently, I had done something wrong. I just assumed that she didn't like Fleetwood Mac. So naturally, I had focused my hatred of this world squarely on them.

It wasn't until recently—June 2004— that I released my hate. All of it. A veil has been lifted, and finally I can see clearly. It's been a near-religious experience. I strongly recommend the writings of Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius to clear any troubled or wayward minds. As for Fleetwood Mac, well, Jeremy Spencer of Fleetwood Mac wrote the song "Somebody's Gonna Get Their Head Kicked In Tonight" in the 1960s, a good decade before there was an audience for that sort of thing and, well, something should be said about that.

LIP

KEITH THOMSON

THE RENTAL ECONOMY

My good friend, Sean, married a sweet girl from Brooklyn. She just happened to be born and raised in the neighborhood that I moved to from Manhattan, and in which I still live. Luckily, after a stint outside of the neighborhood, they moved back and just a few blocks from me. Sean is one of my oldest friends, so I'm glad to be able see him often, getting together for beers or occasionally an "excursion," a term we use for exploring city activities: museums, parks, the waterfront, theater, etc.

I think his wife is dear and I've watched as his young daughter has grown from infancy into toddlerdom. His job as a unionized electrician affords him a comfortable living with family healthcare, a retirement plan, and general security.. They appear to have The American Dream.

Sean has a minor predicament at the moment. It seems they must leave their apartment in the coming year. They have built a comfortable life for themselves. Their little girl gets a good, well-rounded education. The elementary schools are excellent and the neighborhood is culturally diverse and aware. Manhattan is just across the East River, three subway stops away. I believe it's really an ideal environment to raise a kid in.

Last week, Sean went to look at a house for sale in the neighborhood, and brought me along as a second eye and opinion. The house was on West 9th St. in Red Hook., the last street before the expressway, which, when you cross, leaves you at the edge of the projects. It is the exact street where the neighborhood changes from quaint to dangerous.

The ad said the house was going for $650,000 but needed work. Being an electrician, Sean can be handy and was hoping he'd be able fix it up, live in one unit and rent the other two to cover the mortgage. As soon as we entered we were disappointed. All three units needed much work, both cosmetically and structurally. It would have cost at least $100,000 to make it livable, and each apartment was only a small one bedroom. Hence, there was no way Sean was going to be able to afford to fix it up, much less rent the available units for an amount that would cover the mortgage.

I can only imagine that the building would have to be bought by a wealthy person or a management company, either of which would most likely renovate and turn it into a one family. This has been a common trend in New York City housing. Although most political campaigns include a housing platform, they don't address the needs for middle-income housing. There are often programs for low-income housing, such as Section 8 and clauses for minor percentages of newly constructed buildings reserved for lower income residents, but the bulk of the new construction in both Brooklyn and Manhattan is for "luxury" coops, condos or rentals, and the median price for a two-bedroom apartment in Manhattan (as reported by the *New York Times*) is $920,000, a price well beyond the means of almost everybody I know. Thus, we are pigeonholed into a cycle of renting, and at costs that don't allow for savings that would eventually lead to a purchase within the city. Hence, we continue to rent, without accruing any kind of equity.

I saw a recent PBS documentary about the population dissipation in Rural America. With the out-sourcing of manufacturing jobs, many small cities are losing their sons and watching hometowns dilapidate. In one interview, an elder of a small Kansas town urged their youth to move on because there wasn't anything left for them to build on. I would theorize that it's not just small towns. There's no better example of this than Sean's wife who, while remaining in the same, respectable economic class, cannot only not afford to buy a home where she grew up, but can't afford to rent either. The wealthy elite are raking in money and building high-income housing for those in the same income bracket (themselves?).

As we brooded over a beer at the local bar, Sean's concern weathered his voice.

"Where'll I go?" It trembled slightly.

"Yeah," I was of no comfort. "Where'll we go?

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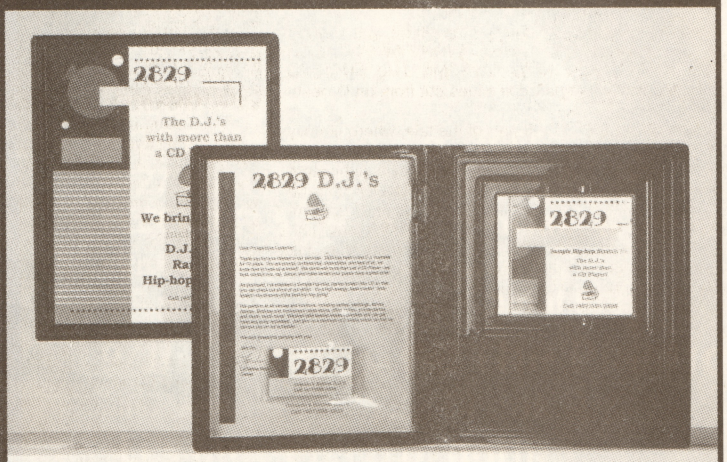

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If down the road people decide they want to sell all their Briefs records and never see us again, I'll go do something else. And everybody can fuck off. How's that for punk? Eat shit.

THE BRIEFS

DAN MCCLERNON

Anyone who insists that punk is dead has never heard The Brief's. Influenced by our punk forefathers circa 1977, they live and breathe the Gospels according to the Buzzcocks, Ramones and Generation X. Since their inception, this band has done and seen a hell of a lot, including releasing two critically acclaimed albums, inking a major label deal, leaving said major label deal prior to releasing a solitary thing, and--perhaps most importantly--bringing back the skinny tie. All of this culminates in the Brief's' third (and possibly best) full-length, **Sex Objects** *[BYO]. I talked to the band about the new album, reincarnation and their favorite sex objects, so if any of this sounds appealing (which it damn well should), read on because you might just walk away thinking that Punk Rock's not the rotting corpse you've been led to believe it is.*

Under the Volcano: Please introduce yourselves and tell me what you play in the band.
Steve E. Nix: My name is Steve E. Nix. I play guitar and sing.
Daniel J. Travanti: Daniel J. Travanti, guitar and vocals.
Chris Brief: Chris Brief, drum.
UTV: How and when did the Briefs form?
Steve E. Nix: The Briefs started in 1999. We didn't have any songs, but we got an opportunity to play a party so we wrote three and went and played. That was a blast-The Spits played too. We kinda just kept the band going after that.
Daniel J. Travanti: Really, The Briefs had zero aspirations. It was a strictly for fun, basement thing.... if someone had told me when we started that five years from now we'd still be doing this I probably would have become a fry cook instead. There's room to move as a fry cook.
Chris Brief: Fuck! You mean we could be cooking fries right now!? I didn't know I was joining a band--I thought I was signing up for the marines.
UTV: The band hails from Seattle, an area that was absurdly huge in the early to mid '90s due to the Gr*nge phenomenon. What was your opinion of what was going at that time, both musically and socially? How has the music scene there changed since then, whether it be different bands, different people coming out to the shows, or different venues?
Steve E. Nix: I guess that in the '90s it was trendy to go to live music venues. Now all those types of people go to dance clubs. The kids who go to punk shows could care less about all that. We currently have a great punk music scene-a lot of cool and innovative bands are playing around, lots of good shows to go to.
Daniel J. Travanti: It still rains. It's too expensive. The radio still sucks...there are good bands around, but it's heavily outweighed by the new Gr*nge: Emo. Seattle loves it's Emo.
Chris Brief: I wouldn't know. I grew up in New Mexico, and I hate all music.
UTV: So how does it feel to know that you have almost single-handedly revived a retro-style of Punk Rock that was all but dead, as well as making skinny ties cool again?
Steve E. Nix: That's a severe overstatement... we do work hard and tour a lot, but there are plenty of other very good bands out there nailing the initial spirit of Punk Rock. It's great to see more people coming out to shows, and it's cool to see kids hanging out at record stores with bad haircuts and cheap sunglasses. Skinny ties are the only cool ties. I mean really, if you're going to wear a tie as part of your retard/cool guy/punker get up, are you even going to consider wide?
Daniel J. Travanti: I think tons of bands have been doing that sort of thing before us, but we toured like crazy and that had a lot to do with us getting known. I think there was one year where we did something like over 250 shows; it's kinda sickening.
Chris Brief: I can't find a skinny tie to save my life!
UTV: In the mid/late '90s, Street Punk had become extremely popular throughout the country once again, only to go the way of the dinosaur by the new millennium as far as some people are concerned. As a genre that derives its influences from many of the same bands as you do--Ramones, Buzzcocks, the Damned, etc.--how does your take on 1977-style Punk differ in comparison? Furthermore, do you think the style that you play could end up going out the same way as Street Punk in a couple of years? What do you think could cause that to happen?
Steve E. Nix: I don't know really what "Street Punk" is. I mean, the Unseen gets called "Street Punk," but to me they are just really good Hardcore with good songs. I thought Street Punk was supposed to be something like Oi!, but most of the stuff I hear is just like GBH, and most of what I hear that is supposed to be Hardcore sounds like Metal to me. I'm not a fan of genres, I'm a fan of good bands... I like good songs and I like bands that keep things interesting. I love all types of punk music except the Metal and Emo shit. I don't think we sound very much like any other bands out right now. That's intentional and that's probably why we don't stand much of a chance of becoming a hugely popular band. I don't care too much; if down the road people decide they want to sell all their Briefs records and never see us again, I'll go do something else. And everybody can fuck off. How's that for punk? Eat shit.
Daniel J. Travanti: Really, we just do this because it's fun. If it stops being fun, we'll stop.
Chris Brief: Fuck the streets, we're freeway punk!
UTV: The Briefs literally seemed to become an overnight sensation, simply by word of mouth, with every punk magazine praising your debut full-length *Hit After Hit*, as well a feature on the cover of the now defunct *Hit List*. Did you ever expect that the record would be received so warmly?
Steve E. Nix: No. We were just happy to put out a record.
Daniel J. Travanti: All that record was was a demo session, with songs that we never thought anyone outside of Seattle would hear. Everything that happened after that was a complete surprise.
UTV: You released *Hit After Hit* on Dirtnap Records, located in Seattle. Being that you're from the same city, did you have any personal ties to the label or it's owner prior to the release of the record? If so, did that strongly influence you to release the album on it?
Steve E. Nix: I think we met the Dirtnap guys right before we started working with them, so, no.
Daniel J. Travanti: I'm pretty sure we were the first full-length record they did, and as I recall they were the only label that would do anything with us. They were the guys that supported the small scene in Seattle that was happening around that time, kinda the whole Gibson House crowd--bands like us and The Spits. It was before really anybody outside the Northwest knew about any of it. If it wasn't for Dirtnap, we never would have done anything.
UTV: After the release of *Hit After Hit*, the hype on you guys seemed to be spinning out of control, leading to the band signing to Interscope. However, you parted ways long before anything was ever released. What the hell actually happened?
Steve E. Nix: They gave us some money and then realized that they hated us. They're creeps. We knew that going in, but it's nice to have money to eat and pay bills with. Our A&R lady would show up to the studio all whacked out on pills. She'd yell insults at the producer and engineer, and then pass out on the couch for hours. She wouldn't recognize our drummer most of the time. We didn't like them, and they didn't like us. And there was also the fact that a higher-up at the label found out about his daughter getting crabs from our tour manager.
Daniel J. Travanti: At some point in your life you gotta eat shit to find out what it tastes like. It tastes bad, by the way...
UTV: So you released one more album on Dirtnap and parted ways for your third album on BYO. Was it difficult to leave Dirtnap after all the history between you and the label? You guys were the label's cornerstone act, as well as the band that made Dirtnap a household name, and vice versa...
Steve E. Nix: Dirtnap is a great label, and so is BYO. BYO just seems like the best home for us right now.
Daniel J. Travanti: I agree.
Chris Brief: I also agree.
UTV: June 29th marks the release of the Briefs' third album, *Sex Objects*, on BYO. Who should we treat as sex objects? Women, midgets, farm animals? Or are we talking about the mechanical or plastic kind? So as not to upset the feminist readership, can you explain the title as well as the song by the same name?
Daniel J. Travanti: Women, midgets, farm animals....all of the above. You're so on it's like you live in my brain. The song that the album takes the name from happens to be about the plastic kind, something we feel very strongly about. We just liked the title, and we called the record

that. I'm SURE I don't have to say this, but just in case: nothing we do or say should ever be taken seriously.

Chris Brief: And you can take that last answer very seriously.

UTV: On *Sex Objects*, the leadoff track kind of took me by surprise, as did a few others. The opener, "Orange Alert," is about terrorism, while "Destroy the USA" and "No More Presidents" also revolve around politically-oriented topics. Being that the band is not known for their political leanings, are these
tunes supposed to be taken tongue in cheek--like many of your tunes--or is there really something within these tracks that you needed to get off your chest? **Daniel J. Travanti:** Both. But the songs aren't hardline political songs. We're not a political band by any means, but there are certain things that influence our personal lives that creep into songs. "Orange Alert" and "No More Presidents" are just pure sarcasm , really. But for the record, we do have things on our chests--like nipples and the occasional small hairs.

Chris Brief: With all the crazy stuff going on right now, it's hard not to be a little political.

UTV: "Shoplifting at Macy's" is a tribute to Winona Ryder. If you were the security guard who caught her stealing, how would you have handled the situation? Is there anything she could've done to perhaps...I don't know...persuade you to let her go?

Steve E. Nix: Actually, that song has nothing to do with Winona Ryder. It's a personal account from some years ago. I do like Winona Ryder though.

Daniel J. Travanti: Me too.

Chris Brief: I met her once. Made a total ass of myself. Nothing new there.

UTV: Overall, how do you feel *Sex Objects* measures up to your previous albums, both of which are considered by many to be modern-day classics? Furthermore, now that you're on BYO, the possibility of reaching a larger audience than ever before starts to become a reality. Are you excited about that prospect or have any concerns that the new legion of Briefs fans might just not "get" what you're all about?

Steve E. Nix: I don't even get what we're all about most of the time. Right now we're on tour with Lars Frederiksen and the Bastards and we're playing to larger all ages audiences than we normally would. It's killer. Sure, I want The Briefs to reach more audiences. If people like the songs and the sound of the band, then they're getting it y'know? I don't care if some kid who likes my band has never heard of Eater and the Lurkers and Plastic Bertrand. As for the new album, I really like it, and I'm happy it's getting released by the excellent people at BYO.

Daniel J. Travanti: Take me to hog heaven, or leave me bleeding in the streets like a mutant!

Chris Brief: It seems like I've heard that somewhere before, Dan...

UTV: So you call yourselves The Briefs, but is that really your underwear of choice? Do you ever switch it up with the occasional boxer or thong? Our readers need to know these things.

Steve E. Nix: The name is not about underwear; it's meant to mean concise, short, brief. I'm willing to try wearing a thong, though, for sure.

Daniel J. Travanti: Our name is so ridiculous....I'm not sure how we got stuck with it, but we did. Better than Winger, I guess.

UTV: If you could be reincarnated as the Ramones or the Buzzcocks--two of the greatest Punk bands of all time--which would you come back as? And remember, this zine is based in New York [laughs].

Steve E. Nix: The Ramones. They released more great records.

Daniel J. Travanti: Fuck off. I love both but don't believe in reincarnation-that's stuff better left for Satanists.

Chris Brief: I love both but I would never want to live in England, so I'm gonna go with the Ramones.

UTV: Thanks guys! If there's anything you'd like to add, don't hesitate to do so now.

Steve E. Nix: ...and don't take no shit off of nobody!

Daniel J. Travanti: The square root of nine is three. X

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Black Metal has gone through so many changes since its inception, which most people trace back to Venom and their earliest release in 1980. You've had church burnings, murders, keyboards, no keyboards, multiple members, single member bands, and now orchestras. On Dimmu Borgir's new album, ***Death Cult Armageddon*** *[Nuclear Blast] the band sports a 50+ piece Norwegian orchestra, that--unlike that garbage Metallica pulled--was actually incorporated into the songs. This album is more full and more epic-sounding than possibly any Black Metal recording prior. On top of that, the band is assaulting the American shores as part of the current Ozzfest lineup and tearing up the main stage going on just prior to Slayer, Judas Priest, and Black Sabbath. I went to check out the show in New Jersey and got to sit down with founding member Silenoz (guitar) and ask him about the current state of the band including their drumming issues since the departure of Nick Barker. It's good to sit with a band that has no desire to go to a major, even with the current trend of extreme bands like Cradle and Satyricon signing on.*

Under the Volcano: To start, why don't you tell me about the name and the origin of Dimmu Borgir; where did that come from?
Silenoz: The band name? Well, it's Icelandic, it is actually a place on Iceland that is a lava formation. The legends say it is suppose to be one of the gates of Hell. It has some kind of atmosphere that we felt was killer at the time we were coming up with a name and we wanted a different band name than the usual one word name. We wanted something special.
UTV: What are the origins of your stage names?
Silenoz: My stage name is taken from Greek Mythology. Silenoz is the same as Satyrs, but they kind of had a higher step. It is the same meaning but a higher range in Mythology.
UTV: There was a rumor going around the States about five years ago, that there was some kind of confrontation between Shagrath [vocals] and the guys from Mysticum; do you have any idea what that stemmed from?
Silenoz: I don't know. They seemed to be okay people when we meet them face to face, but what they say behind our backs is not something we can fully control.
UTV: What lead to your decision to hire a full orchestra for the new album?
Silenoz: Well, we tried a orchestra--a smaller one--on the last album and it worked out pretty cool. But we wanted to have more depth and more feeling to it, so we decided to go for more musicians, so now we used 50 instead of 15. We used more percussion and different instruments, so we will see what we do on the next album. But it worked really well on this album.
UTV: Do you find it hard to reproduce that sound live?
Silenoz: Not really, because when we did the demos for the new album, we only had keyboards to do the demos with. That way we found out how this was going to sound live with keyboards only. I don't think people really notice a big difference, aside from listening to an album is a different experience than listening to it live. Then again, we are a band that has two sides to it; one live side, which is more extreme and intense, and you listen to the album on CD, so it is two different things.
UTV: What role did you guys have in Hot Records?
Silenoz: Shaggy was the one that started working for the guy that actually owned Hot Records. I guess he started out as an assistant or whatever, just helping out and looking for bands to get signed and stuff. It wasn't really a big thing, just something that he kept occupied with when he didn't have much to do.
UTV: All of your releases are on Nuclear Blast, except that first 7"; is there a reason that didn't get re-issues through them?
Silenoz: Well the 7" was re-released on Nuclear Blast when we re-released our first album--it was like bonus tracks on the first album. Our second album is still not released on Nuclear Blast, but we are working on that, so…
UTV: What about the release you have on Hammerheart? Is that the same tracks?
Silenoz: That is a split CD we did with Old Man's Child back a ways. But they are actually not allowed to release it, so I don't know why they are still doing it.
UTV: With bands like Cradle of Filth and Satyricon all going the major label route, is that something you guys have looked into or been approached about?
Silenoz: Not really. We have been meeting people from major labels, but we have just shook hands and said thanks, but no thanks. For us, being on Nuclear Blast, it is the best we can be. Getting that top priority on an independent label, big Metal label, is better than being under prioritized on a rich major label. It is much better for us this way.
UTV: With so many of the band members in other bands or projects, do you find it hard to work?
Silenoz: No, not really, because Dimmu is the first priority for all of us. The side projects are something we do on the side to keep ourselves occupied when we are not busy with Dimmu.
UTV: So, like Old Man's Child, before Dimmu, that was Galder's priority, but now…
Silenoz: Now that is turned around. He still has to do a couple more albums for Old Man's Child because he is still under contract from Century Media, but that is it.
UTV: How did you decide on Reno as your new drummer?
Silenoz: Well we tried him out, because first of all, he was from Denmark, so he is close. It worked out okay on the shows we did at first, but then it turned out to be some visa problems for him in the States, so we had to fly Tony [Laureano], a friend of ours, in the last minute. Two days before we got to the States so we could rehearse with him.
UTV: Is Tony from another band?
Silenoz: Yeah, he plays for Nile. He flew in like two days before we went on tour, Ozzfest tour, and just rehearsed the set twice. He plays better than Reno.
UTV: What's it like to win a Metal Grammy, 'cause for us, a Grammy here is like a joke.
Silenoz: I wouldn't say it is a joke at home, but at home, the music scene in Norway is so small compared to the States. It doesn't mean all that much. Of course it is cool because you get recognized for the work you do, that's always nice. But, I guess we also won the Alarm award the same year. For us, that means a little bit more, because it's the musicians themselves that vote for the album, compared to the Grammys where there is a jury and a bunch of people who don't really know anything about Metal voting. But it's cool.
UTV: With the exception of Cradle, you guys have more elaborate images than anybody. Who do you work with on those things? Is that someone in the band who comes up with all the images?
Silenoz: Yeah, we come up with all that stuff. That is our deal, it has always been our deal. It wouldn't work if we let some stylist or someone to come in and make things. We know what works best for ourselves. At least we hope so. It has always been like that.
UTV: How many original members are still left in the band?
Silenoz: Two.
UTV: Two, you and Shagrath?
Silenoz: Yeah, we have probably had like 17, 18 different members during the last 11 years. Maybe it looked like Shagrath and I were two assholes to work with, but it's not really like that. Me and him don't always agree either. It is about doing compromises and all the members can't do that or they drift away from what they first, original

thing with the band was. Then you have to get someone else in there.

UTV: How is playing Ozzfest here in the States, which is a tour, different from playing the big European summerfest circuit?

Silenoz: It is pretty much the same. The only difference is that this is a tour so it is like every second or third day. It is the same thing for us really, because we don't get a sound check you know. For us to get a sound check, make, obviously, the sound for us much better. The more you get into the tour, the less you need to worry about the sound level and the sound outside. It is a new experience, but it is not different from playing the big festivals.

UTV: Tell me a little about how the concept for the "Progenies of the Great Apocalypse" video came about .

Silenoz: Well we felt, since it was the first proper, professional video, we felt that we should put all the budget into it and make it look really big and professional. We were lucky to get ahold of this Swedish director, Patrick, and he had some really good visions of how he thought it would look and should look. We gave him the lyrics and so the concept is basically, I guess, in general speaking, it is more or less looking at ourselves as fearless survivors of Armageddon and then everything starts all over again Different values and different attitudes about religion and all that.

UTV: With an Ozzfest lineup like Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, and Slayer, it sort of brings about an idea of what kind of fan is going to attend, have you seen any problems appealing to those older fans? That is a legendary Metal lineup.

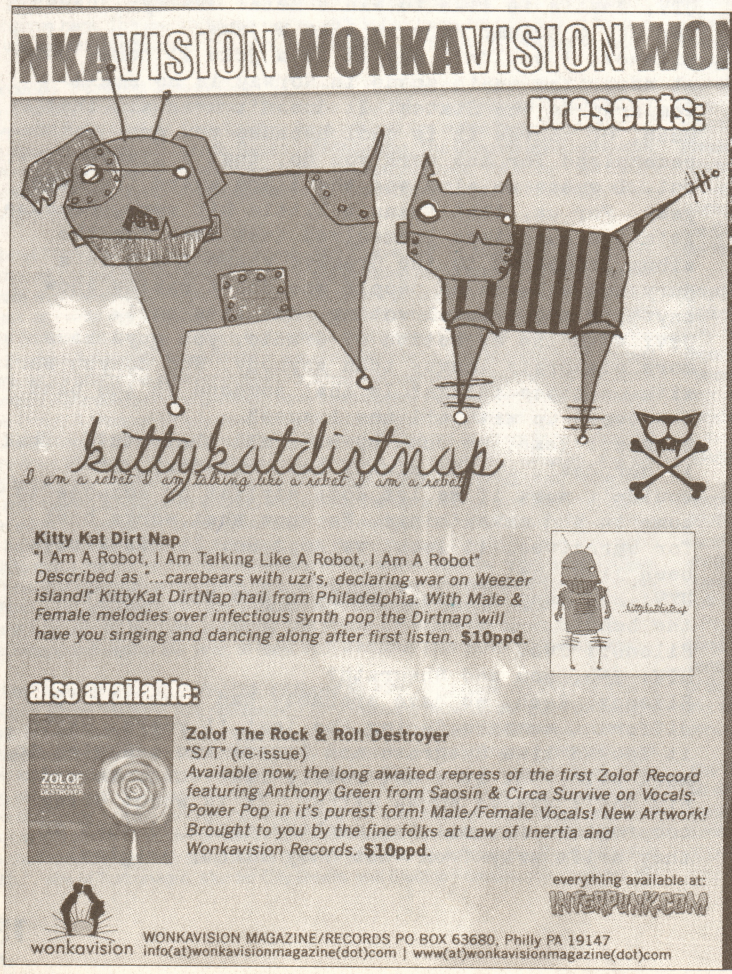
Silenoz: For us to get up there with those guys, still is not a reality. It is such a big thing for us, if you think too much about it, you'll be like, "What are fucking doing here?" on the main stage with these guys. I can tell that there are some oldies in the crowd that are like "What the fuck? What's this band about?" but that is cool because we do our package on stage even if we play 30 minutes or one hour and 30 minutes, so it doesn't matter.

UTV: Now you play on the main stage this year. Cradle headlined the second stage last year, they ended up playing during the day, which was a disaster. Have you run into that problem? Because it gets darker so much later?

Silenoz: We play around six o'clock, so for us, it is still daylight, but it is a little bit better for us at places like this because they have a little roof. But we have also played places where there is no roof at all. The sun hits you straight in the face; of course it is not really good for the nice lights and the lighting show, you don't really see much of that. We still have to do what we can do.

UTV: When this tour ends, what is next for Dimmu?

Silenoz: Probably going to start writing on the new album around Christmas. Maybe take a couple of months off first, then start writing together again around Christmas. We have some ideas, but we don't write music on the road or the tour bus or anything. We have to be relaxed in a nice environment to be able to come up with the new stuff. X



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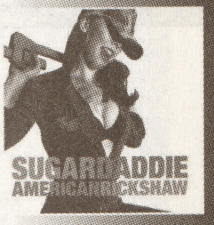

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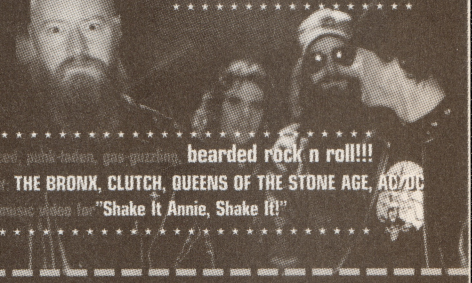

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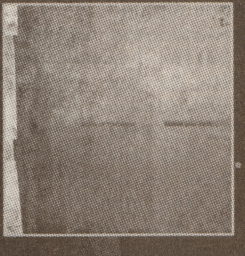

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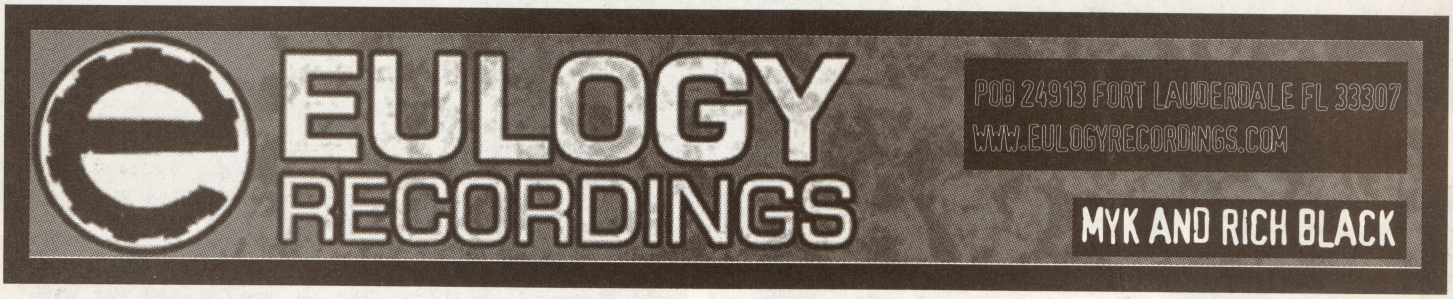
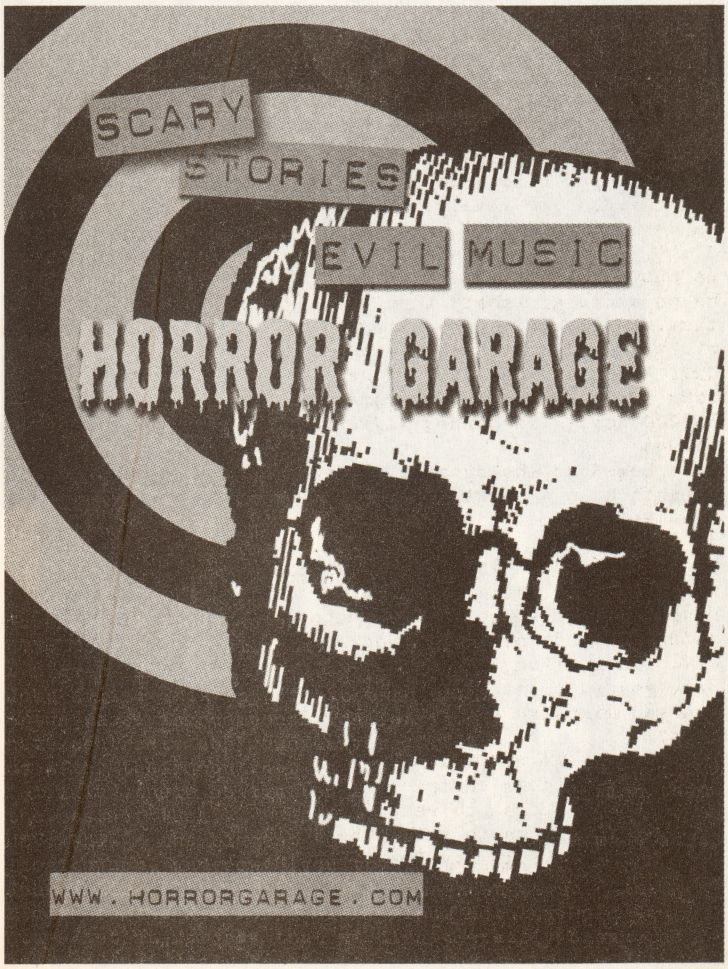
In the past ten years, the term "Metalcore" has permeated the Hardcore scene and either enraged or enveloped listeners. Those who believe bands should suck it up and call themselves "Metal" are mad, while a growing contingent in the scene believes that contemporary Hardcore just happens to sound metallic. In the past we've seen labels like Hydra Head, Ferret, Trustkill and Lifeforce rise and feed the beast that is "Metalcore."

With bands like Evergreen Terrace, Until the End and the Judas Cradle currently on its roster, and being a starting place for bands like Walls of Jericho, Where Fear and Weapons Meet and Unearth, Eulogy Recordings is yet another label devoted to the music and not the fads. Eulogy owner John Wylie deemed Rich Black and I worthy enough to share in his knowledge about where the label came from and where it's going.



Under the Volcano: Did you go to the beach today? If so, how was it?
John Wylie: I wish...actually, today is July 4 and we are having a BBQ at my house. I was at the beach last weekend though, and it was great. I got a little too much sun, though.
UTV: It's been whispered that John Wylie is the "scene boss" in Florida. Could you describe what might be meant by that?
John Wylie: I don't know, actually. I would say that's South Florida, because I have been doing shows for a really long time and I'm one of the only people that has been doing shows consistently. Along with that, I own Eulogy and Hand of Hope Records, and we also print shirts for a lot of the bands down here. I think the combination of these things might give someone that impression. I definitely do not want to be the scene boss [laughs].
UTV: You've played in some influential bands--Where Fear and Weapons Meet, Morning Again and Until the End--are there other bands we might or should know of?
John Wylie: Well, my first Hardcore band was Organized Pain--this was a long time ago, and was very similar to old Sick of It All, etc., but not nearly as good. After that was Culture, and Tension [not Tension* from Long Island], then the ones you mentioned.
UTV: If you had to give one reason for your musical projects being so revered, what might that be?
John Wylie: I've always worked very hard to tour and promote any band I've been in. With Until the End we're limited because the labels are the first priority.
UTV: Do you have any feelings on the current Straight Edge scene?
John Wylie: I think that it's in a pretty good place at this moment; it died off hard a few years ago, and seems to be back now. As long as people are out there talking about it, I think it's a good thing.
UTV: What originally inspired you to start a label?
John Wylie: I started a label "unofficially" in 1999, when I was in Morning Again. I was frustrated in dealings that I had with labels, and I felt that my experience on the road would help me run a label. I had a better understanding of what it's like to be in a band, and how to relate to someone touring in a band and trying to succeed. It's hard to relate to someone working at a label and telling you to go on tour if they have never gone themselves.
UTV: What was the label's first release and when? How did it come about?
John Wylie: It was catalog number two, but it came out first, Red Letter Day from South Florida. The members actually went on to be in The Rocking Horse Winner on Equal Vision. I was friends with them and saw them play one day, and we got it going. I loved that band.
UTV: How many people does it take to run Eulogy, and what are their positions?
John Wylie: I make sure everything comes together properly, A&R, accounting, management, etc. Dan [Mazin] is the day to day label manager, production, A&R and office manager. Pete [Salpeas] does graphics, web, etc. Jeffy ["Protagonist"] does store sales and promotion, and Jordan does tour promotion, mailorder, advertising. Also, Jason Lederman just started here running my new label, Hand of Hope Records [www.handofhoperecords.com] that I own with Chris [Brown, drums] from Evergreen Terrace.
UTV: What qualifications must a band meet to be on Eulogy?
John Wylie: Well, mainly we have to think the band is good at what they do, they must tour, and we have to get along with the people in the band. It may not seem like much, but we don't really find too many bands that meet all that criteria.
UTV: Because of their rosters' similarities, do you sometimes find yourself fighting with labels like Tribunal and Lifeforce over signing new bands?
John Wylie: Not really. We are very confident in what we do, and usually a band either fits on Eulogy or they don't. Those two labels are both more Metal labels, and we put out a lot of different stuff. If a band wants to be on a "metal label" then this isn't the place for them. we have a lot to offer bands, and we can tell right away if it's the right match--usually.
UTV: What has been your biggest selling band to date?
John Wylie: Evergreen Terrace, by far. We have about 35,000 copies of *Burned Alive By Time* in press at this moment
UTV: How does the success of former Eulogy bands like Unearth help or hurt the label?
John Wylie: Well, it helps us a lot. We sold Unearth to Metal Blade, and we also have another record coming out by them next year, so we still have a huge stake in what they are doing, along with the catalog releases we have. I think anything that happens that increases our potential audience is a good thing.
UTV: You mention "selling" bands off...how many times have you done this, and who were the parties involved? Can you gimme an example of how this has worked in the past?
John Wylie: We did this with Glasseater. We still had a record on their contract, and we made an agreement with them for them to release the next record, and we waived our rights to this. The same circumstance happened with This Day Forward and Unearth with the

labels they ended up on.
UTV: Do you feel slighted when a band leaves Eulogy for a bigger label?
John Wylie: This hasn't happened without our consent or us receiving compensation for it. This is why you have contracts and good lawyers. If a band ever leaves us after their contract is over, then they have fulfilled their obligation to us, and we will wish them the best of luck.
UTV: What's the biggest "mistake" you've ever made as a label owner, and how'd you try to correct it?
John Wylie: [laughs] Man... it was when we sold the rights to the New Found Glory album Nothing Gold Can Stay. Let's just say that we didn't exactly break the bank on that deal. We started signing contracts with bands that are more detailed, and working with good lawyers.
UTV: Your roster seems to do a lot of touring; has this ever not been the case? If so, what changed, and how did you change it?
John Wylie: We have always tried to work with bands that tour; that's really the only way to sell records, and pretty much our main goal when signing bands.
UTV: What changes for the label when you go out on the road?
John Wylie: Well, I don't really go out on the road anymore. We play weekends only, and that doesn't really have much effect on anything. It actually helps because I usually have other Eulogy bands on the shows, and it gives me a chance to hang out with them.
UTV: Do the other staff members, or Lumberjack [the company that distributes Eulogy] staff feel more compelled to "work" UTE albums because that's YOUR band?
John Wylie: Well, two other UTE members work here, and that definitely has a little effect; they know that we're not a touring band though, and touring bands receive priority at Eulogy. Believe it or not, Until the End isn't a priority when we have a few releases at once. The members that work here know that we are not a full-time band.
UTV: What is--or was--the relationship between Eulogy and Alveran Records?
John Wylie: We used to distribute their records over here. We have moved on now to helping them set up their own deal through Lumberjack and grow themselves. They license most of our releases in Europe. It's a great label, and it's only the beginning for them.
UTV: How did the Evergreen Terrace covers album come about?
John Wylie: They just called me one day and said, "We want to do a covers album, will you put it out?" I said, "Of course." I thought it was a great idea if it was done right.
UTV: What should we know about your new Eulogy bands like Black My Heart and The Warriors?
John Wylie: Black My Heart plays straight forward heavy Hardcore. They are from the Boston area and are going to blow up when their record comes out this Winter. The Warriors I think are going to surprise everyone; they have a passion in their songs that I haven't heard since bands like 108 and Inside Out were around.
UTV: What are your newest releases?
John Wylie: Our newest release is Age of Ruin, amazing Metal from Maryland, similar to Darkest Hour, etc. They're on a good portion of the Warped Tour this Summer. Next up is the new Until the End, Nevea Tears from Los Angeles, new Shattered Realm, The Warriors, and Black My Heart.
UTV: Lastly, what band--be it one on Eulogy or not--has had the most impact on your life and why?
John Wylie: That's a tough one. I'd have to go with Pantera on that one. Most people will think that is the dumbest thing they've ever heard, but that band was the perfect blend of aggression and Metal for me. Fucking amazing. X



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[DARYL]
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As was the case with bands like the Hives, Refused, In Flames, At the Gates, and the Hellacopters, American's don't catch on to a band from overseas until they become huge here, and then tend to say either, "I was there from the beginning," or "I just got so and so's first album" even though it's really their twentieth. Enter Heaven Shall Burn, a German Hardcore outfit that has four releases on the Lifeforce label--which has only had limited distribution here until recently--and is now unloosing the fury of their new full-length, **Antigone** *[Abacus/Century Media]. This unrelenting collection of songs will propel Heaven Shall Burn to prominence the same way As I Lay Dying's Metal Blade debut did for that band. I got the chance to interview drummer Matthias Voigt and get his thoughts on politics, veganism, music and the scene as a whole. This is one band you can't afford to miss, or wait as long to check out as the previous bands I mentioned.*

HEAVEN SHALL BURN

Under the Volcano: The US version of *Antigone* has two bonus songs. Why did you do a different cover for the Korean release?
Matthias Voigt: The label in South Korea, Dopemusic, asked for an exclusive bonus track. Since we recorded a cover from the German Punk band, Die Skeptiker, we decided to take that one.
UTV: Why cover Disembodied and Hate Squad?
Matthias Voigt: Hate Squad was one of the first German bands that played a mixture of Death Metal, Thrash Metal and Hardcore the way it should be. We always had that idea in mind, and for *Antigone* we finally did the Hate Squad song "Not My God." Disembodied had an huge impact on that whole Metalcore genre; we've always admired this band. We had to do a cover of "Dislocation." It's one of their best songs, in my opinion.
UTV: How did you end up on Abacus as opposed to Century Media proper?
Matthias Voigt: We just negotiated with the Century Media peeps in Germany, so we worked out the worldwide deal with Century Media, except for South America. We're on Liberation Records there and Lifeforce Records released the vinyl of *Antigone*. More important than to switch to a bigger label, was that we still wanted to work with both Lifeforce and Liberation for this release as well, so Century Media agreed, and are willing to work that way. Plus they always gave us the feeling that they really do believe in the band. Well, we really feel like [it's] home there.
UTV: To date, what have you found the main differences to be between working with a label like Lifeforce and Abacus/Century Media?
Matthias Voigt: Lifeforce is also a really professional and hard working label, so the differences aren't that big. The only thing we notice is that more people are responsible for certain things. That makes everything much faster of course. And we're reaching more people as well. It's easier to get interviews with bigger magazines and so on. The communication between us and the people at Century Media is going really well. Until now, everything is really fine and we're still excited about the work with Century Media.
UTV: With a proper US release finally, are there plans to tour here as well?
Matthias Voigt: At the very moment we're working on a US tour for October 2004. Unfortunately there's nothing sure yet, but we really wanna tour there. People should check our page www.heavenshallburn.com for more news concerning that.
UTV: Are there plans to re-release your catalogue in the States as well?
Matthias Voigt: Well, there's no reason to do it. All of our releases are available in the US through Lifeforce Records except for the split 12" with Fall of Serenity. They have a really good distribution there as well.
UTV: How about the out of print split with Fall of Serenity?
Matthias Voigt: That was just an limited thing, just 1000 copies. So it's gone. We're also not that happy with what we did on that split, so it's okay that it's not available anymore [laughs].
UTV: You have been called Metalcore in reviews of your previous albums, but the new album has more of The Haunted to it than, say, As I Lay Dying. Would you yourself say Heaven Shall Burn is now a full-on Metal band?
Matthias Voigt: It's not an really important thing to us if people call us a Metal band, Metalcore, Hardcore, or whatever. We just do our thing. We don't care about such things. I'm not such a big fan of all these terms. I see Heaven Shall Burn as a Hardcore band, but that's just my own opinion. We come from the Hardcore scene, we still play shows there, we go to Hardcore shows, we support the Hardcore community like they've always supported us over the years, we are 100% behind the "Hardcore ethics"...so we're a Hardcore band, although we play Metal.
UTV: Tell me about the topics you address on *Antigone* with songs like "Architects of the Apocalypse" and "The Dream Is Dead".
Matthias Voigt: First of all, we want the people to think, but we don't wanna lead their thoughts into certain directions. I don't wanna explain our lyrics. Maik [Weichert], our guitarplayer is doing all the lyrics, and I also never talk to him about that. I just read them and think about them. Maybe sometimes I don't get what he wanted to express, but that's not the point. He made me think and that's it. But we also have lyrics, I wanna talk about, lyrics that deals with true stories, which are worth to tell. "The Weapon They Fear" is dedicated to Victor Jara. He was a singer and actor from Chile, and he got killed by General Pinochet's troops. Jara was a simple man, but he was able to reach the people's heart with his critical songs. Due to his ability to reach the people he got more and more influence. Pinochet thought that the only way to stop him, was to kill him. So they did. He became a martyr, just like Salvador Allende and many other people who lost their lives in this resistance fight. "Tree of Freedom" is dedicated to Nelson Mandela and the fight of the African National Congress. Mandela fought against the South African apartheid and had to spend almost 30 years of his life in prison. We all think that it's really important to always remember people who fought for the freedom of the individual, even during some of the darkest times mankind has ever seen...
UTV: What is your take on the Iraqi war?
Matthias Voigt: It makes no sense to talk about that issue again and again. Everything is already said, I think. Few people think that the war on Iraq was a necessary thing, but more people think that it was the wrong way. That's it. I just say that I think that it wasn't a good decision to start that war! It's just a bit strange that people care that much about that war. You know, it seems to be a trend to shout "Fuck Bush!" and stuff. Many of these people have no clue about politics, but want the be "political" at the same time. It's a trend to have shirts with such slogans. Actually, I don't really know what I should think about it; on one hand it's really good to see that people care more about such things than they did some time ago, but it's also a trend that could be over soon. I would like the people to get more informed about politics, about ecological issues and stuff like that. At the moment I just see people shouting slogans without knowing anything-that's how it is here in Europe. I'm not talking about the US! I don't know how it is there. I mean, not that many people were going on rallies or were wearing shirts with slogans in 1994 when about 800,000 people got killed in Rwanda within 100 days! Not that many artists took a stand about the war in Yugoslavia in 1999! I just think that people should also care about the fact that some of the leading industrial nations still didn't sign the Kyoto Protocol--just as an example! Everyone just cares about THAT war in Iraq! There are wars allover the world! What about them? What about the continuing destruction of our planet? What about people dying because of hunger in certain parts of Africa? There

are still more that one other issue we should keep an eye on.

UTV: You seem to be very pro-vegan. Tell me a little about how you came to that decision in your life.

Matthias Voigt: Well, we're all vegans because we think it's not necessary to eat and consume things that cause ecological problems or the suffering of billions of non-human animals every year. We're living under good circumstances--like most people in Europe and North America-so we have the choice. We're able to see what we wanna consume/ support and what not. We're all not depending on products with an animal origin. But, we also don't see veganism as the solution for all the problems our planet suffers from. It's just the easiest and first step into the right direction, a step everybody should do. It's no problem at all to live like that. So why still support murderer and exploitation?

UTV: In the personal bios on your website, you all list racism and/or fascism among your hates by name. Are these both still big problems in Europe?

Matthias Voigt: Well, I think it's a problem all over the world, not just in Europe or Germany. You can find racism and fascism everywhere. In the Metal/ Hardcore scene, you can find some bands with really strange views and so we really wanna let everyone know what's up with Heaven Shall Burn concerning that! Some bands tolerate right-winged and racists scum in their audiences, but we really don't want them to enjoy our show, to buy our CD or to wear our shirts! As long as such stupid people appear [at] shows, we want them, at least, not to feel welcome!

UTV: Amon Amarth is listed several times on your site, between the links page and listed in virtually every "all time favourite band" list. Does Heaven Shall Burn have a history of some kind with Amon Amarth?

Matthias Voigt: We all love Amon Amarth, there's no doubt! To me, personally, it's the best band in the whole wide world! Period! We started the band around 1995/ 1996 and Amon Amarth played their first show in Germany ever in 1997. That was when I noticed them first. This single show, their first MCD *Sorrow Throughout the Nine Worlds* and the debut full-length, *Once Sent From the Golden Hall*, had a deep impact on Heaven Shall Burn . Around 1997/ 1998 there was the time when we kinda found our own style. That was also the time when we were all listening to Amon Amarth day and night [laughs]. I'm really looking forward to their next album--I can't wait to hear it!

UTV: How did the split with Caliban come about?

Matthias Voigt: The plan existed for some time already, before Lifeforce released the split CD/ LP. Caliban played their first show in East Germany in the beginning of 1998. We were also on the bill and so we met, talked, had fun, were moshing together. Since that evening we were talking about a split, I guess. In 2000, *Asunder* was just released, the split came out on Lifeforce Records.

UTV: With a name like Heaven Shall Burn, have you gotten flack from religious groups the way Burn the Priest did prior to changing to Lamb of God?

Matthias Voigt: No, never. People are asking us about the name quite often, but we never got any trouble because of it.

UTV: Tell me something about Heaven Shall Burn that most people wouldn't know.

Matthias Voigt: Well...it's nothing really important or interesting, but most people think that our singer [Marcus Bischoff] and our bassplayer [Eric Bischoff] are brothers, because they have their last name in common. They're just cousins...that's it...[laughs].

X

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PECCATUM

MYK

Photo: Siren Lauvdal

In the world of Black Metal, few bands rival the sheer impact and originality Emperor released on an unsuspecting public... but even the greatest of the great come to an end. It's even less frequent that members of groundbreaking bands rise from the ashes of their past projects to once again leave their mark on the minds of the masses. Ihsahn, founding member of Emperor, is now at the helm of Peccatum, and with wife Ihriel has unleashed ***Lost In Reverie*** *[The End] the band's fourth release, and first domestic US album. I was lucky enough to have Ihsahn answer some questions about his past, present and future musical endeavors.*

Under the Volcano: Did Peccatum at all lead to the demise of Emperor?

Ihsahn: Both Peccatum and Zyklon had been around for years prior to the end of Emperor, so the reasons for ending Emperor concerned Emperor alone.

UTV: With such a diverse vehicle as Peccatum, why did Ihriel do Star of Ash?

Ihsahn: She had quite a few ideas that she wanted to pursue in a different manner, and though Peccatum is a versatile constellation, there is always something else going it alone. Thus, *Iter.Viator* turned out quite different from Peccatum, and I think the experiences she made in that process has been invaluable, also to the current state of Peccatum.

UTV: What led to Lord PZ's departure from the band?

Ihsahn: PZ left Peccatum in order to devote himself fully to Source of Tide. He prefers the good old band constellation, and with Peccatum not doing much rehearsals or live performances, the collaboration came to a natural stop.

UTV: If he is still on the new album, why not consider him a member of the band?

Ihsahn: That would mean considering K. Aalefjær a member too, and he contributed to a majority of the songs. In my opinion, a member will have to be there from the start and mould the ideas into a genuine expression.

UTV: Why did you decide to leave Candlelight Records?

Ihsahn: After two albums and an EP with Candlelight, we felt it was time to try something new, as we were heading in a different musical direction and all. Initially we got quite a few offers from different labels, but ended up starting Mnemosyne Productions. This way we would be quite independent and we would like to work with other acts.

UTV: Why such a long break between *Amor Fati*, which came out in 2000, and *Lost In Reverie*, which just hit in 2004?

Ihsahn: Yes, four years is quite a long time between albums. Still, we have been occupied with other projects, Ihriel with the Star of Ash album and I with the last Emperor album. In addition to this we have spent one and a half year making *Lost in Reverie*, probably throwing away material for two albums in the process. We wanted to seek out a new direction, and needed time to experiment. That part is often the most fun one as well, so it's easy to get caught in that phase of a recording!

UTV: Why has Peccatum not toured in so long?

Ihsahn: As said, we've been quite occupied with other projects and have put priority to our studio work. We've had several offers to go live with *Lost In Reverie*, but considering the nature of the material, this would be quite a big project to pull off, and would require a bigger ensemble. So, we have no immediate plans for live performances, but this is something we would like to go through with in the future.

UTV: Of all the songs to cover, why Judas Priest's "Blood Red Skies"?

Ihsahn: It's a great song!

UTV: Why were the fifth and eighth acoustic tracks on *Amor Fati* not titled?

Ihsahn: They were musical transitions, and did not need a title.

UTV: What is the river theme on *Lost In Reverie* derived from?

Ihsahn: The dreamy and ruthless movement of water was among the three primary sources of inspiration for *Lost In Reverie*, the other two being Theodor Kittilsen's *Svartedauen* [*The Black Death*, a collection of illustrated poems] and French Surrealism. All felt well-suited to underline as well as build the dreamy and decadent claustrophobic and unpredictable atmosphere we wished to create.

UTV: Why did you choose not to use Akkerhaugen Studios on *Lost In Reverie* as you had with the three previous releases?

Ihsahn: We've had our own studio, Symphonique, for many years, and we've always done a lot of the recording and pre-production work there. Usually we've gone to Akkerhaugen or other studios to do final recordings and mixing, as it is not always easy to keep objective all the way from start to finish. But this time it felt natural to do it all ourselves.

UTV: What's next for Peccatum, Ihriel and Ihsahn?

Ihsahn: We're currently working with a follow-up EP and video for Peccatum. There is a lot of work with Mnemosyne, and I'm working with material for an Ihsahn solo album. X

First, the bad news....and there's a LOT of it.

The US is still fighting an illegal war Iraq, Osama bin Laden still hasn't been brought to justice and1.8 million US jobs have been lost. Corporations are showing record profits while the American worker's real income has plummeted by 28%. One of my friends who needed minor surgery died waiting in the emergency room because a doctor didn't answer his pager for eight hours-but hey, golf calls! The same corporation our Vice President worked for is awarded a no-bid contract to help "rebuild" Iraq, then tells one of his colleagues to "fuck off"-and somehow Howard Stern racks up astronomical fines! A "fake news" program like ***The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*** *is more informative and impartial than what the networks are presenting as "real" news. I may not have showered yet today, but there's a stench I don't expect will wash down the drain.*

Now the ***GOOD*** *news. The President of the United States, the Vice President--and many of those around 'em-****ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES AND YOU CAN FIRE THEM!*** *In America, this process is called "voting." It's estimated that 60% of Americans don't exercise this privilege, one that people in some other countries literally die for. PunkVoter.com, a website operated by the fine people at Fat Wreck Chords, is a website dedicated to educating the public and actually getting people registered to vote. To this end, they've even released two volumes of a compilation titled* ***Rock Against Bush,*** *and even have links to download registration forms-what are you waiting for? Stop bitching and start* ***doing*** *something,*

Punk Voter webmaster Toby Jeg and Fat Wreck Chords owner/NOFX bassist/vocalist Fat Mike Burkett filled me in on their mission while sharing their thoughts on the current administration.

PUNKVOTER.COM

RICH BLACK

Under the Volcano: Is it fair to say we're now living in a plutocracy? Why or why not?

Toby Jeg: Sure we're living in a plutocracy! But in fairness to modern-day America, I can't think of many systems of rule where the wealthy and privileged didn't have disproportionate power. The Bush administration, however, takes the cake and undoubtedly boasts the most plutocratic regime I can think of. The cabinet he assembled is the richest in American history, and like the famous Bush Resume reads, even the poorest multi-millionaire, ol' Condie Rice, has a Chevron oil tanker named after her. Yikes! It really is the worst case scenario of "fox in the henhouse." But ya know, it requires a lot of resources, money, and connections to have a reasonable shot of winning an election, and until America seeks reform in regards to campaign funding, we're stuck with wealthy lawmakers.

UTV: I remember originally visiting PunkVoter.com and seeing a mission statement declaring something to the effect "Our goal is to throw every single Republican out office." I was just looking at the site, and couldn't find that again. Has PunkVoter's mission changed since its inception? If so, why?

Toby Jeg: It's true, we've backed off from the idea of throwing the GOP out of DC. Some of those guys have a lot going for them, which is why we think they might be better suited for patrolling the streets of Tikrit or Fallujah. Sending Republicans back out into the real world doesn't make as much sense as sending them to the front lines. So to answer your question, we at Punk Voter believe that we should re-instate the draft and start with some of the war's biggest supporters and most outspoken patriots: men like Orrin Hatch and Rick Santorum. Har har.

Oh dear…let a boy dream. You probably want a real answer, and the story goes like this... When Punk Voter was starting to pick up a lot of steam about a year ago, we were approached by Scott Goodstein, a guy who really admired what we were doing and had worked on a lot of progressive campaigns. Scott has a punk rock background, but at the same time knows a hell of a lot more about the DC landscape than any of us rabble rousers. Fat Mike was really eager to get Punk Voter's message out there as much as possible, and in order for us to be taken seriously by the political world, and upon Scott's advice, we had to get a little more organized and register our PAC with the Federal Elections Commission. So, like MoveOn.org, we're now a registered 527. For all intents and purposes, it's a bunch of hoops to jump through and bullshit like that, but we're happy to do this because we're not taking any chances in this election year. The biggest restriction of course is that we can't advocate electoral action when it comes to the executive branch, meaning we can't make statements like "Vote against Bush!"; but we're a "voter education" group and we can talk all the shit we want about that dopey jerk. You remember correctly though, I used to write some nasty stuff about Junior and the 527 lawyers were NOT thrilled about it. Maybe down the road Punk Voter will ditch the 527 aspect of the movement so we can all go back to burning effigies and whatnot.

UTV: I had once asked Justin from Anti-Flag what political "party" he belonged to, he responded something to the effect of, "I tend to vote as a Democrat, but I first consider myself a humanist." Might that be a cornerstone of any sound political philosophy, rather than claiming to be "Left" or "Right"? Does this sentiment figure into the PunkVoter philosophy at all, or is it definitely a "Left" thing?

Toby Jeg: Ahh Justin, now there is a genuinely sweet individual. To understand his thoughts you have to understand his upbringing. He's a first generation American and comes from a large working-class Catholic family where all of his siblings are in some way working for positive change and social justice. They really make me proud, and they really embody what a great American family should be. In the context of your question, it's clear to me why a middle-class Pennsylvanian would identify more with the Democratic Party. Because they ARE more humanist. Yes, the Dems haven't been quite the "working man's party" they used to be, but if I have to choose between a party that is funded by labor unions or a party that is funded by weapons manufacturers, I'll take the former. The Left is more humanist, and if you boil down liberal thought you have a lot more value placed on social programs and on the well being of those around you. To most it sounds like some wacky socialist utopia, but you can't deny the value it places on people. In contrast, I got a pal that identifies with the values of the Right. He's pro-war, pro-gun, anti-choice, opposed to civil unions for gays, etc. But because he's a pot-head, and a typical selfish

conservative, he's fine with the legalization of marijuana. It's crazy! So, to me it seems that people on the Right are supportive of civil liberties ONLY when it's convenient for them, which is about as far from humanism as I can think of. But shit damn, I think I'm getting side-tracked and am not answering your question. Yes, I'd say that Punk Voter's political philosophy is one that values humanity above all else. This movement is a product of the bands that originally inspired us: Dead Kennedys, Clash, Propagandhi, etc. Those bands, and almost every single other punk band, have always espoused ideals that put people before corporations, denounced fascism, and spoke out against intolerant institutions. That's Punk Voter.

UTV: On the site it's stated that "our goal is to register and mobilize over 500,000 of today's youth as one voice. How close are you to your goal of getting half a million people registered to vote? How did you come up with that specific number as a goal?

Toby Jeg: We came up with a number as big as 500,000 based on how large and vibrant the Punk Rock scene has become over the last decade. We easily get over 500,000 hits a day on the site, and the first *Rock Against Bush* comp is closing in on 300,000 copies, so I don't think that 500,000 is an unreasonable estimation of how many people we've reached. We still haven't totaled up the voter registration numbers, but right now on the Warped Tour the Punk Voter booth is averaging about 200-300 a day, with bigger shows getting around 400. We have definitely registered thousands of new voters and Punk Voter has reached a lot more people than I ever imagined it would. In the last Presidential election, New Mexico was won by only 365 votes; and a margin that small teaches us all that every vote is crucially important, and that even a couple hundred new voters could change the outcome of the election and the fate of the world.

UTV: There are a lot of well-known musicians contributing guest columns on the site, from Armand of Sick Of It All to Russ from Good Riddance, to Jello Biafra. Did you approach them, or did they approach you? Or does it work both ways?

Toby Jeg: Everyone in the indie-punk scene has been so supportive of our anti-Bush movement, especially bands. So in most cases band members submit them to us, but we're always interacting with bands and it's something I bring up. People ask how they can contribute, and sharing your beliefs in a guest column is the easiest way to express your thoughts on the Bush administration. Blake from Jawbreaker/Jets To Brazil recently submitted a guest column, so look for that one too.

UTV: What do you feel John Edwards brings to the table as a Vice President hopeful?

Toby Jeg: I read this huge story that *Newsweek* did on him and was most impressed by his background and ability. The guy is an example of how hard work and exceptional brains can take you from being the son of an impoverished millworker to being the best attorney around and a self-made millionaire. He was poor as a church mouse, but was a gifted student that put himself through law school and then outmatched everybody as a trial lawyer. He simply worked harder and did more research than his opponents in the courtroom, and that's the kind of mentality and work ethic America needs from its leaders. Sure he's a shiny politician, but Edwards is proof that meritocracy is still alive in the US, even though it would seem that stories like his are becoming less common in a country that once offered more social mobility. As a guy who worked his way from the bottom to the top, he's vastly different compared to the current Prez, who would seem to be a product of your aforementioned plutocracy.

UTV: My friend Pete is a hardcore Republican--and sometimes a dick. He argues that under Bush, corporate criminals are really being prosecuted for the first time, and that universal healthcare sucks because Canada is plagued by three times the operating room fuck-ups we are. He ALSO argues that under Bush, Wal-Mart is finally having legal troubles because of their business practices, which he thinks Wal-Mart deserves. Pete's also happy that the US went into Iraq, he says, "At least Bush is doing SOMETHING about the Middle East." Ultimately, though, Pete is exactly the type of opposition that PunkVoter and the Democratic ticket are facing; how do you convert him?

Toby Jeg: Lately Bush Jr. has been doing the best of converting Republicans. Even members of his own cabinet have been speaking out about his terrible leadership skills and poor decision making, and if you're a fiscal conservative, you have to be especially bummed on his economic policies. On the front page of today's paper I read that the White House predicts this year's budget deficit to be $445 billion, which would be the largest in American history. He broke the record last year--wasn't that enough?!?! It baffles me to think how Republicans can support a guy who really falls short when it comes to typical conservative values. Morality has always been something they tout, but Bush has a history of drug abuse, was convicted of drunk driving, etc. Military experience seems to be another priority for those hawkish Republicans, and we all know George Jr. sorely lacks in that department, having gone AWOL

FAT MIKE TALKS ABOUT PUNKVOTER.COM

Under the Volcano: What is the relationship between Fat Wreck Chords and PunkVoter.com?

Fat Mike: Everyone who works at Fat Wreck works for PunkVoter. We all share the same hatred of George W., and we all do our part. Some more than others.

UTV: Popular perception is that Fat Wreck Chords started out as a punk label featuring sarcastic, fun bands that drank a lot of beer. As time has gone on, however, bands like Good Riddance and Anti-Flag have put a political awareness into the mix. If you had to pick one point--or release--where you realized Fat was a "political" label, what would it be?

Fat Mike: Actually our third release was one of the most political. Propagandhi's *How to Clean Everything* was intensely political and that was 1992. In '93 we put out the first Good Riddance LP and that was political as well. In fact, there are political songs on both our first two releases, NOFX's *The Longest Line*, and Lag Wagon's *Duh*. I think people don't consider Fat to be a political label because a lot of our bands are fun and have a good time on stage. You can be political and funny at the same time, according to Al Franken and Michael Moore.

UTV: At what point did it occur to you that something like PunkVoter.com was needed? Was it NAFTA? This past election being decided the way it was? Enron? September 11th?At what point did inaction become unbearable for you?

Fat Mike: Everything became very clear to me after the 2000 presidential election. It was time for punk bands to do more than just sing about change. It sounds cliché, but we had to unite against a common enemy.

UTV: The *Rock Against Bush* comp and concerts are the probably one of the most visible artists' protests coming from the punk scene--or anywhere--else in recent memory. How did the idea come about? What would someone see at a *Rock Against Bush* concert that they won't see anywhere else?

Fat Mike: Not a lot of hippies. The ideas for the comps and the tours just came gradually at the weekly PunkVoter meetings. How can we get kids to vote? Tell them things that will make them angry and scared. Draft coming back, abortion on its way to becoming illegal, Patriot act, and tax breaks for the ultra rich are a few things that we have been telling people about, and they are listening. We have to take this shit on the road and into record stores because the media is ignoring these issues. That's why we had to become our own media source.

UTV: Have you considered making PunkVoter.com it's own record label proper? Why or why not?

Fat Mike: No, it's a political movement, not a musical style. We are becoming our own lobby. Shit, Eric Melvin and I met with John Kerry and his campaign manager last week. People are paying attention to us.

UTV: How did you approach putting the comp together--contacting the bands, deciding on content, etc.

Fat Mike: It was all pretty easy. I just called up every big band I knew and asked them to be a part of it. All but three said, "Sure." As far as content goes, that was trickier. We had to make a bunch of cold calls to producers, film makers and comedians. Luckily, we all share such hatred toward the president, that everyone gave their work and time for free. We are all on the same team, and it shows.

UTV: Is it true that there's a second CD coming out shortly? If so, who can we expect to hear on it?

Fat Mike: It comes out August 10th. Some of the bands are: Foo Fighters, Green Day, Bad Religion, Rancid, Yellowcard, No Doubt, Lag Wagon, and Operation Ivy.

UTV: Regardless of who's President come January 2005, where would you personally like to see this country go?

Fat Mike: Let's just stop the bleeding for now. **X**

from the very demanding "Champagne Division" of the National Guard. If rational people are made aware of the facts, then it's not hard for them to see that Bush is bad for America, and that's what Punk Voter aims to do: expose the truth about the Bush administration.

UTV: Historically--"and I believe that it's never been otherwise--"the presidential candidate that spends the most money on his campaign wins. In order to win this election, Kerry is gonna hafta compete with generations of Texas landholders and corporations like Halliburton. What's a presidential hopeful to do? Any advice for Kerry?

Toby Jeg: From what's been reported thus far, Kerry and Edwards are pretty flush too and shouldn't have much trouble with fundraising. No one will ever be able to compete with Bush Jr. when it comes to "pay to play" politics and that's because he makes for such a great puppet. People argue that big corporations usually give to both parties in order to hedge their bets-which is true-but they ALWAYS give more to the GOP because they are shameless when it comes to catering to special interest. As for why companies give more to the GOP than the Dems, I think Bill Maher explained it best with the analogy, "If you're gonna take a girl to the prom, you're gonna want to take the slut." For example, the NRA has got their tongue so far up Bush's ass that he is even opposed requiring gun manufacturers to have safety devices on all guns. What kind of lawmaker thinks that guns shouldn't have a safety device?

Kerry doesn't need any of our advice because Bush's frightful leadership has galvanized the entire liberal community and everyone from Ted Turner to Dave Matthews is putting their all into the anti-Bush effort.

UTV: On the site there's much discussion about third party candidates, and the opinion that a "protest vote" for a third candidate--"like Nader"--simply shaves off votes from Democrats. Doesn't Clinton getting elected despite Perot running disprove this?

Toby Jeg: It should be made abundantly clear that we cannot and are not endorsing any Presidential candidate. A lot of your questions seem to link Punk Voter to the Democratic Party, and we would never want this movement to turn into something that was a tool for any political party. That said, I think it's fine time that someone at Punk Voter come out and say that Ralph Nader is one of the finest and most accomplished Americans alive today. He's done more for our country than anyone in the White House, Senate, or Congress, and he should be recognized for the great work he's done for consumer advocacy and the general safety of us all. BUT, I personally don't think he'd make for a good President. The man's an uncompromising crusader who doesn't really have much experience in government. Hmmm, crusader…no experience…sounds kinda like Bush when ya think about it! I think Nader supporters should consider the fact that in Michigan the GOP got 90% of signatures to get Nader on the Ballot. That pretty much says it all: the Republicans are putting Nader on the ballot because they know it will help get Bush Jr. re-elected.

UTV: The FCC has just raised "indecency" fines tenfold, seemingly targeting Janet Jackson's breast being exposed during the Superbowl, and the Howard Stern radio show. Legally, doesn't Dick Cheney saying "fuck off"--or "go fuck yourself"--in public to Senator Pat Leahy render invalid any pre-existing FCC "guideline" for what is obscene? Have you had any dealings with Stern due to some of your common political ideas? Although his objectifying of women would be a problem for most punks, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

Toby Jeg: We sure did. Fat Mike was on with Stern for 20 minutes one morning and they were talking about *Rock Against Bush Vol. I*. Personally, I think a lot of the things on his show are questionable, and I don't mean that in a prudish "he's so inappropriate" kinda way. He portrays black people in a very demeaning fashion, treats women even worse, and has said Palestinians should be wiped off the face of the Earth. True, Howard Stern can be an asshole, but he has a wide audience throughout the US; an audience primarily made up of Average Joes and working stiffs, and he seems to be opening up a lot of eyes. A guy like Stern exemplifies the effect Bush has had on people who until recently identified with conservative views, but have since turned on the current administration. So between Howard Stern getting all the plumbers to vote, Russell Simmons getting the Hip Hop community involved, and Punk Voter getting the punkers activated, we just might save the world yet. Maybe.

If it were up to me, Punk Voter would endorse Beetlejuice as our candidate for President. "You know my gravy's good."

UTV: Is there a connection between PunkVoter.com and MoveOn.org? If so, what is it?

Toby Jeg: Yes and no. By virtue of the fact that MoveOn.org is a 527--as is Punk Voter--we operate on somewhat similar terms. I think they were one of the biggest influences on Fat Mike because he saw how effective they were with their emails and massive online community; over two million people are members of their network. MoveOn.org has gotten so effective, in fact, that they've drawn some serious ire from the GOP and are sued by those turds on an almost-daily basis. No shit. The Republicans are doing everything in their power to shut down groups like MoveOn.org and Punk Voter because we've done so much damage to them and exposed so much of their bullshit.

I admire MoveOn.org because of their organic growth and because they've done great work to stimulate the progressives of America. But because MoveOn.org has gotten so powerful, it has really been co-opted by the larger political establishment, and is inching ever closer to becoming tools of one particular party. Just as we find it sickening that institutions like Fox or MTV have become apologists for the war in Iraq, we would NEVER want to be apologists for some bullshit legislation put forth by any politician we may be aligned with, Democrat, Green Party, or otherwise. So yeah, more power to MoveOn.org; but Punk Voter will try to keep it real. We want to make sure that we stay true to the punk scene and make choices that reflect the wishes of our members.

UTV: As interest in PunkVoter grows, how are you prepared for the inevitable harassment that might come from the shadowy interests you're trying to expose? Have there been any lawsuits, strange website shutdowns or weird phone calls at the PunkVoter headquarters?

Toby Jeg: We're not really concerned with that stuff, and I'm not a big conspiracy theorist. I'm grateful to live a country where I'm allowed to express views of dissent, and I don't expect, nor am I afraid of any harassment. I get an email now and then from the occasional skinhead who insults my sexuality or something like that, but no worthwhile criticisms and nothing that can't be deleted with a click of the mouse. Now, Fat Mike on the other hand…he might wanna be on the lookout for any conspicuous tax audits. Ha. Bear in mind that we are in the most progressive city in America, San Francisco, where open-minded and enlightened people surround us. We've had IRS employees, CIA, and even-gulp--cops send us words of encouragement and support. That's one thing that we can't forget: most of the country didn't vote for Bush Jr. and even more of the country is against him now! We're not a deviant group, we actually reflect what most of our fellow citizens think of the current administration.

UTV: Regardless of who's president come January 2005, where would you personally like to see this country go?

Toby Jeg: Well, right now I'd be happy if we could just curtail the trend of us evolving into an isolationist faith-driven military industrial complex. Once we get that outta the way, maybe we can work on some of the basic things that other Western democracies have achieved: citizens allowed to see a doctor, access to education, a more equitable distribution of wealth. X

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the store, the life, the legend

These last few years have been an amazing time for Long Island's underground music community. Members in bands like From Autumn to Ashes and Brand New have applied lessens learned while immersed in the local Hardcore scene with astonishingly results: commercial radio play, national press, and record sales in the hundreds of thousands. Ten years ago, the suggestion that these things were possible would have gotten you laughed out of the PWAC, but here we are.

Taking Back Sunday is another band tied to Long Island's Hardcore scene that's brought attention to this sandbar. Guitarist Eddie Reyes has played in local Hardcore bands like Mind Over Matter, Clockwise and The Movielife. Taking Back Sunday's debut full-length, **Tell All Your Friends**, set sales records for Victory Records. And just last week, Taking Back Sunday's second full-length, **Where You Want to Be**, shipped gold–as in "gold record." How could we not be happy, excited and proud?

It's been a long, hard road. There have been lineup changes (guitarist John Nolan and bassist Shaun Cooper left and started Straylight Run, also on Victory), rumors of breakups, and people who don't know better questioning the band's credibility. Now with Fred Mascherino of Breaking Pangaea on guitar and Matt Rubano on bass, Taking Back Sunday is revitalized and ready to take on the world, but **Where You Want to Be** speaks volumes for itself. Soaring vocals ooze over buzzing guitar riffs that are simultaneously joyous and poignant. There is sarcasm tempered with sweetness, and melodies that will stick in your skull like a corkscrew. Don't be surprised if you hear the words "Taking Back Sunday" and "Grammy" in the same sentence over the next few months.

Eddie Reyes answered as many questions for Darren and I as he could amidst the chaos that was early August. Thank you, Ed!

Photo: Justin Borucki

Under the Volcano: I heard about this great Long Island band named Booze and Adventure; what can you tell me about them?
Ed Reyes: They only come out of the woodwork once in a while. They're a bar band, and they only like to bring the Rock on Long Island. Now that you mention it, I've never seen them and Taking Back Sunday in the same place at the same time before...
UTV: Is the title of the new record, *Where You Want to Be* a callback to the On the Might of Princes' album, "Where You Are and Where You Want to Be? If not, how do you feel about the possibility that Taking Back Sunday could ultimately be responsible for a LOT of On the Might of Princes records being sold?
Ed Reyes: On the Might of Princes just broke up, but they are an awesome band. Best of luck to all of them.
UTV: Judging by the relationship between music writers and awful puns I'm sure you'll be asking, but are you "where you want to be?" Is your current level of success everything you'd been expecting it to be?
Ed Reyes: I'd like to say that it's all a blessing to me. We didn't expect to be where we are right now, but we thank God and everyone who has been behind us for helping us get here.
UTV: Matt Rubano is a friend of Mark's who was a session player on *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*. Do Matt's addition to the lineup and the band's inclusion on the *Spiderman 2* officially catapult Taking Back Sunday from "Indie Rock Darlings"--regardless of record sales--into the arena of "mainstream"?
Ed Reyes: I think we're far from mainstream because we're on an indie label, but as far as kids coming to the shows, yes, we have to deal with that. There's no way to tell kids to not like us, nor would we ever want to send fans home. It's just part of the process.
UTV: When you were asked to contribute to the *Spiderman 2* soundtrack, what went through your mind? Do you find it funny that you guys are on there with Dashboard Confessional, Midtown and The Ataris--other bands that used to play VFW Halls? Did you get to meet Kirsten Dunst?
Ed Reyes: It's just awesome to be on *Spiderman 2* comp; it's a very high honor. I don't think there's anything funny about the other bands, all of us worked very hard and they deserve to be where they are!
UTV: As of press time, *Tell All Your Friends* is a few copies short of selling 400,000 albums, and *Where You Want to Be* has already shipped that amount. Taking Back Sunday is slated to have the first gold record on Victory; at this point, is life more like a dream than reality? What do you do to keep grounded?
Ed Reyes: It's a dream come true. We're going to keep playing whether it's a big theater or a small VFW hall. We don't care, we'll always play music.
UTV: What's your favorite song on the new record and why?
Ed Reyes: "The Union," because it's fast and KICKS ASS.
UTV: To date, Taking Back Sunday has been the subject of hundreds of features. Having done so much press over the span of two and a half years, are there any topics or areas that you wish people would stop probing?
Ed Reyes: Yes... let's stop talking about the past and keep looking forward. There's no reason to harp on past events when we have so much going on ahead of us. And about "credibility" --I think our band has done enough to prove where we've come from.
UTV: In a recent *Rolling Stone* interview, Eminem was talking about how he can't trust anyone he's met since becoming famous. In other words, there are lot of hangers-on and star-struck people surrounding those that are successful. Do you agree with Eminem? What kind of emotional filter-if any-do you put into place when meeting new people?
Ed Reyes: I don't trust anyone anyway, even if I sat home watching TV. I only trust my parents.
UTV: You're also one of the few bands that can draw thousands of kids to a local show, which points to a very active, involved, local music scene-or does it? Are the kids coming to Sports Plus in Lake Grove the same kids that came to shows all along, or are moms bringing their ten year olds at this point? How many people are aware that Eddie Reyes has been a mover and shaker in the LI music scene for the last decade, playing in bands like Mind Over Matter, Movielife and Clockwise?
Ed Reyes: We still draw those kids, as well as new kids, of course. I think it's important for us to play at home, because me and others have worked very hard to build the scene. We always show everyone where we've come from, and that's Long Island!
UTV: When not on the road, the members of Taking Back Sunday are frequently spotted at other people's shows; I [Darren], for one, recall seeing Adam at Dearly Departed and Hey Mercedes shows and encountering Eddie on the way to a Vendetta Red show. After playing out so much and so often, what is it that makes you want to go out to places where you can't blend in and be anonymous?
Ed Reyes: I LOVE to go out and see shows. I've been doing it all my life; why would I be bored of it now?
UTV: Finally, any last words for the kids?
Ed Reyes: Rich, I want to thank you personally for everything you have done with *Under the Volcano* for the scene, and specifically for us! Thank you again. X

TIME IN MALTA

DAN MCCLERNON

Under the Volcano: Please introduce yourselves, what you do in the band, what's your sign... you know, the usual.
Chris Lyon: I'm Chris. I play guitar. I'm a Capricorn and like long walks on the beach, watching *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* and rocking veggie restaurants all over the country.
Todd Guillon: Tofutodd here, Aries, Irish for your wonton consumption. I've played everything in this band at one point except the drums, which I have been banned from touching for my lack of coordination.
UTV: Since the release of *A Second Engine* there have been a number of personnel changes. First off, what were the reasons for the changes? Todd, what made you decide to give up the bass and stick to vocals only on the new record? Had the band been meaning to become a four-piece for some time or was Jesse just too good a bassist to pass up?
Todd Guillon: Well, actually the personnel changes between *A Second Engine* and *Alone With the Alone* are long, dramatic, and a bit boring. I've been saving it for my novel and I don't want to blow my deal. The short of it: bye-bye old drummer. Hello new cool drummer, Adam [Goldstein]. Jesse [Hayes], the current bassist, has been in the band now for over two years. I did vocals only for the *Second Engine* tour, then on *Alone With the Alone* I moved to rhythm guitar as well. This a solid lineup now.
UTV: When last we spoke, it was for an interview in *Under the Volcano* right around the time of the release of *A Second Engine*. Since that time, what would you say some of the biggest changes you've experienced have been, whether they be musically or personally?
Chris Lyon: Well, besides the obvious lineup changes, we've gotten a lot of experience on the road and really learned how to be a band that's consistent night after night. We've learned what works and what doesn't work live. As far as writing for the record, we tried to reflect what we've learned on the road on the record as well. This new record is more of a focused effort in that way.
UTV: Now in 2004, you've just released your second album for Equal Vision, titled *Alone With the Alone*. I really dig the album name, as it makes me think of the early days of Punk as well as the early 1990's resurgence, but do you think in this day and age--with Punk/Hardcore being as popular as it is--that the genre still connects to the loner, the kid who can't relate to anyone other than his favorite band? I mean, these days even the kids that pick on him or kick his ass are the ones that listen to Hatebreed. It just seems that Punk/Hardcore has lost that

When last we left Time in Malta, they had just released their debut album for Equal Vision, ***A Second Engine****. Since then, the San Francisco by way of Indianapolis Hardcore wrecking ball has toured relentlessly, fine-tuned its lineup, and perhaps most importantly, released a record that will capture the attention of not only Hardcore kids, but anyone with an inkling as to what Rock n' Roll is meant to sound like.* ***Alone With the Alone*** *[Equal Vision] is the record that these four guys were born to write, and every note echoes what's in their hearts.*

personal, outcast touch in some respects due to its mainstream popularity.

Todd Guillon: I would agree some things you are saying are true. But I would go one step farther. Hardcore, as I see it, doesn't have the elements needed to really break mainstream. Of course there are really successful bands in Hardcore, yet I don't see a band being able to sell millions of records like Metallica or Nirvana. It would have to be watered down quite a bit more, which doesn't appeal to me at all.

UTV: The lead track on *Alone With the Alone* is an intro named "Forty Seven." Most bands are content to name such a track simply, "Intro," so is there a reason why it was given a proper name? I must inform you, that if it's named after the time sequence like I think it might be, the song actually clocks in at forty-eight seconds, so someone's head should roll on this one [laughs].

Chris Lyon: [laughs] Well, you're right. The song was named after the length but the track somehow got mastered with an extra second on there. You'll have to take this up with the mastering engineer, Alan Douches, who is completely amazing otherwise. I think naming a track "Intro" is just too boring, don't you think? I mean we're not a Hip Hop act.

Todd Guillon: Also, the numbers 40 and 7 have symbolic values....eww, weird.

UTV: After said intro comes the blistering sonic frenzy titled, "Bare Witness." Am I off-base to think this song is a direct attack on Bush? As a band that in previous efforts seemed to stay away from political commentary, is this a direction that you will continue to explore?

Chris Lyon: I think that we've been exploring more subject matter recently, but even in our old songs there is some political commentary, although it's much more indirect. I think Todd's lyrical style is a mixture of personal and more worldly matters wrapped into one.

Todd Guillon: The lyrics were written after reading the first chapter of Michael Moore's last book. Most of the stuff I knew already but to hear it put all in about 20 pages made me angry as hell. Now seeing the film *Fahrenheit 9-11*, this is the visuals for two tracks on the record, "Bare Witness" and "Louder Than Bombs."

UTV: In relation to the previous question, what are your thoughts about Fat's *Rock Against Bush* comp? Would you be interested in contributing a track, such as "Bare Witness" to something along those lines? Furthermore, do you think that the kids buying the album can be influenced in their political views simply by listening to a compilation such as this, or do you think most walk away with nothing more than an enjoyable listening experience? Woo, sorry for the flood of questions there-it's almost like an essay question!

Chris Lyon: We'd love to be a part of something like the *Rock Against Bush* comp. I think that these sort of things are really influential, especially to kids who would normally not care or not be totally motivated to participate in something political. It sort of brings a coolness to being politically aware again, which has been missing in underground music for some time. We always try to have meaning in our songs and lyrics, so there is always a message of some sort. Whether the listeners prefer to pay attention or to just enjoy the music is up to them. Either way, as long as they're enjoying what we do, that's cool with me.

UTV: I've been a huge Time In Malta fan ever since I first heard *A Second Engine*. From then on, I've been counting the praises of you guys to anyone that will listen, yet when asked to describe what you sound like, I'm usually at a loss, since you encompass so many different influences and genres. So now, I figure I'll go right to the source: how would you describe your sound to a complete stranger?

Chris Lyon: I would say that it's really heavy, melodic Post-Hardcore. Or you could call it Emo-Metal too, I guess [laughs]. It's definitely a mixture of Rock and Hardcore. It's a double-edged sword not being able to simply categorize the band. It makes it harder for some people to understand you, but at the same time I think we're blazing our own trail in the tradition of bands who don't give a fuck and just do their own thing. It's better to create the trend in our minds rather than follow it.

UTV: The other day I listened to *A Second Engine* back to back with *Alone With the Alone*, looking for any differences I could detect in each recording. Truth be told, the differences were very subtle, with the main one being that the music style hasn't really changed much, it's just that the songs themselves have gotten significantly better. Would you agree that as a band on the whole you've become better songwriters? Is there anything specific you'd attribute this to, or does it just go back to "practice makes perfect?" Are there any differences between the two records that as the actual composers, you see that I may have overlooked?

Todd Guillon: I think we made a conscious effort to be focused. It helped that we wrote *Alone With the Alone* in two months, and *Second Engine* was written in three years!

UTV: So with the new release, are you planning on getting out on the road in support of it? And more importantly, do you intend on stopping on the East Coast?

Chris Lyon: Yes, we're planning on hitting the entire country. We just played Hellfest and are now on tour with Sick of It All, Terror and Champion which, hits both coasts. After that, we're doing a Tsunami Bomb tour across the US. After that, we're hoping to do some headlining shows and possibly go back to Europe.

UTV: Thanks again guys. Good luck with the new record, and I hope to see you guys out here soon. If there's anything you'd like to add that I may have missed, now's the time to do so. Thanks!

Todd Guillon: Thanks for your support! X

Audio Reviews

100 Demons *(Deathwish, Inc., 32 Congress St., Salem, MA 01970)*. Have you ever looked at band pictures in a CD booklet and all the members are trying their hardest to look tough for the camera, but their wussiness still shines through? That ain't a problem here—these men look seriously pissed off and I would do everything in my power to stay the fuck outta their way. And that basically sums this record up as well: pissed off, no nonsense, no frills, non-stop, Hardcore/Metal fury. The singer is actually more versatile than many of this genre, proving at times that he can actually sing when called upon to do so, but on the whole, this record would fit nicely in any NYHC enthusiast's collection. (CD)-**McClernon**

40 Ft. Ringo "Funny Thing" *(Mojo Vegas, POB 145, Ringwood, NJ 07456)*. 40 Ft. Ringo has a goofy name and contains former members of Trixter (yes, *that* Trixter) but the songs are poppy and cute. Fans of Fuzzbubble, Lit (circa *A Place In the Sun*) and Butch Walker's work with The Marvelous 3 ought to be thrilled with this disc, which gives you five bonus tracks beyond the 13-song album. The Power Pop crowd has reasons to celebrate, thanks to *Funny Thing*. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

400 Blows "The Sore Thumb" b/w "The Biggest Hit Yet" (*Gold Standard Laboratories, POB 65091, Los Angeles, CA 90065*). LA's premiere Noise Punk trio (aka the 400 Blows) returns with two aural assaults that leave you bruised and bloody. Imagine a six-foot three-year-old child who taunts you while he beats the shit out of you. Merciless. (7")-**chuck.foster**

A Perfect Murder "Unbroken" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. I remember the first release this band had being very ho hum. It was a decent enough listen, but not very memorable. Seldom do you hear a band improve as much as A Perfect Murder has between releases. *Unbroken* is a monster of a record, in a similar realm as Hatebreed meets Stoner Rock The guitar sounds are seriously groovy, much like Pentagram or even at times Trouble. The vocals are like Jamey's without all the years of road wear, and the tearing Thrash riffs make this a dangerous-sounding release. The breakdowns are perfect. At the moment that all the Testament fans have decided they are getting into this band, a monstrous break comes about and shatters all sense of the songs, the perfect example of a Metalcore breakout. Fans of Nora, Hatebreed, Integrity and Remembering Never should be well on their way to bringing the house down with this album. (CD)-**Myk**

A18 "Dear Furious" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. There are some true Hardcore bands left in the world. A18 is just such a band featuring ex-members of Instead, Chorus of Disapproval, Outspoken and Strife, plus a cover of Egghunt's "We All Fall Down" on their new album, *Dear Furious*. This is classic style California Hardcore with just a hint of Sheer Terror in the vocals. Fans of Sheer Terror, Slapshot and the earliest Conversion and New Age Records bands should eat this up. This album has **so** much attitude and kicks in the power chords something fierce. This I what Hardcore was just after the Youth Crew craze when things started getting heavier and we were all still amazed at how punishing Integrity was on their 7". This is like the band's fourth release and it pisses me off that they aren't the biggest Hardcore band on the planet. True Hardcore by people who haven't given up the faith yet. (CD)-**Myk**

Acid Mothers Temple "Mantra of Love" *(Alien8, www.alien8recordings.com)*. I've seen articles comparing this Japanese act to The Mothers of Invention, but I don't recall any Frank Zappa discs that exclusively consisted of two 20-30 minute noise collages. This band is unique and the liner notes (written in what I call Engrish) are interesting, yet who is going to want to sit through this much uneven music on more than one occasion? The EP format would better suit this talented but primitive band. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Action Action "Don't Cut Your Fabric to This Year's Fashion" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. Originally destined to be "the next Reunion Show album," Action Action is a new band fronted by Mark Thomas, which also features ex-members of Count the Stars and Diffuser. The songs are no longer happy-go-lucky and overly-poppy, but rather synth-driven and emotional; "Instruction" is my favorite off this very-schizophrenic disc. It'll be interesting to see what Victory Records does with a release that doesn't fall into the Punk, Emo or Hardcore categories. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Action Action "Don't Cut Your Fabric to This Years Fashion" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. I guess its been a long time since I paid attention to the Victory Records roster, because I would have never imagined this band on that label. Action Action use synthesizers, guitars, drums, and that retro '80's Pop groove the kids are going crazy for nowadays. The songs are **very** poppy, like something you might here on a Clearasil commercial. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Action Toolbelt (*Fastmusic, POB 206512, New Haven, CT 06520*). No matter how hard I try, I can't hate this CD. Action Toolbelt plays melodic Indie Rock which nods heavily to the Indie Rock of the early '90s—before "Indie" meant "Wuss." I hear a heavy Replacements/Soul Asylum influence, as well as traces of middle period Damned. This is a good CD to put on when you don't want to scare the girls away from the party. It's mellow, but very passionate, which is definitely a plus. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Action Toolbelt *(Fastmusic, POB 206512, New Haven, CT 06520)*. It's a shame that more people aren't talking about Action Toolbelt when it comes to discussing great Long Island bands that are putting themselves out there. The 10 songs on this self-titled disc don't have the best sound quality, but they do have hooks and undeniable meaning in the lyrics. The press materials claim Husker Du to be a big influence, but I hear a lot more Replacements, Brand New and Nine Days than Mould's crew. But, just as commendable as the music itself is the fact that the enhanced CD includes MP3s of this album, which you are encouraged to upload and share. Talk about a 21st Century band!(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Age of Ruin "The Tides of Tragedy" *(Eulogy, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307)*. This is the second release from Age of Ruin within the last 12 months, the last one being released by Tribunal. This album debuts new vocalist Ben Swan, formerly of the band Samadhi. This record is every bit as Metal as the last effort, but they have infused more straightforward "Rock" elements into these songs. Mostly they are subtle little bits, like rhythm guitar parts or some of the drumlines, but they are there. I don't see how a band can release two albums in a year, but Age of Ruin has done it and the albums are diverse enough to make them both very solid. The more you listen to them, the better these records are, and the more impressive the writing becomes. Yet another strong release from the Eulogy camp. (CD)-**Myk**

Alabama Thunderpussy "Fulton Hill" *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd., Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. It is well-documented that I have been a big supporter of this band from the very beginning. Now they start anew with the addition of new vocalist Johnny Weils. The band has always had a more metallic approach to he Southern/Stoner Rock sound than most bands. Weils is a much more Metal-sounding singer than Throckmorton was. Johnny T was a bit more diverse than Weils appears to be, but Weils is so much meaner sounding. With the more edgy voice comes a more edgy sound for the entire band. Maybe it is subliminal and unintentional, but it's there. There is a little bit more Motorhead to these songs, and a little bit more Southern drawl mixed with piss and vinegar. I will not deny that the album takes a couple of listens to acquire a feel for Weils, but once you get into him, you realize that this is 100% ATP and this record yet again proves that musically they're even better, and this is probably the best lineup they have had on a consistent basis. (CD)-**Myk**

Alexisonfire "Watch Out" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534)*. Over the past year or so, Alexisonfire has been one of the most hyped bands to come out of the underground scene, with their name everywhere short of appearing on billboards; now that I've finally heard them, I'm not exactly sure what all the fuss is about. They play emotion-fueled Hardcore with tons of technically-adept, melodic guitar leads that are all the rage these days, and though I'll admit that they're better than many of their peers, it's far from original. The singers alternate between screaming and singing, with the vocals at times coming off as a less frantic At the Drive-In. As stated earlier, Alexisonfire is certainly superior to many of the acts trying to pull off similar material, but it just doesn't move me one way or the other. I enjoyed listening to this record (at least I **think** I did) and am confident that if more bands played with the heart these guys do, Emo might not be the blasphemous word it is these days... but, in the end, the only thing I'm left wondering is whether these guys are called "Alex is on fire" or "Alexis on fire." (CD)-**McClernon**

Amityville Whore *(Sleaze Core, http://amityvillewhore.tripod.com)*. From the deepest bowels of Hell, four drunken necrophiliac demons vomit on plastic and package it as a CD —10 vile liver-sickened morsels of rot to feed your melting brain. Once you listen, you will succumb to the masters: Lord Scumbag, Creep of the Crotch, Fuckface the Rapest and Necroburger. Think Black Metal a la Agnostic Front via *Phantom of the Opera* through the head of Steelwolf. Blaaaaaah! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Anata "Under A Stone With No Inscription" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018)*. Technically this is the band's fourth release if you count the split CD they did on Seasons of Mist. Basically, these guys are trying to take over Morbid Angel's Death Metal crown. These guys play beyond fast ,but they are super technical and precise. The vocalist sounds very similar to Steve Tucker, and what they're doing with their guitars is a hundred times more interesting than what Trey has done on the last two albums. These guys are what traditional Death Metal is all about, except they are advancing it by subtraction. Just go about it the right way and the goods will come; if you practice, you will get faster. If you write good songs, they will get more technical. It seems simple enough a concept that too many people just aren't getting. This is a band to watch out for. (CD)-**Myk**

Anodyne "Lifetime of Gray Skies" *(Level Plane, POB 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906)*. Including splits and comp tracks, this is like the band's seventh release. Unlike most bands that came out of the late '90's Boston scene, Anodyne continues to get more chaotic and more sonically distant from their roots. They feature more parts awash in black noise, ardent screams, and Neurosis-like guitar bashing. The drumlines are hyper-technical attacks like those heard from Kiss It Goodbye or from Dave Whitte (he actually used to be a member of Anodyne) in Burnt By the Sun. With this release, Anodyne has easily surpassed contemporaries like Isis with the quality of the musical vision. It is hard to do these avant garde Hardcore releases without them sounding like noise, and this is one of the best examples you will find anywhere. (CD)-**Myk**

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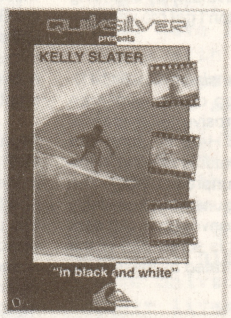

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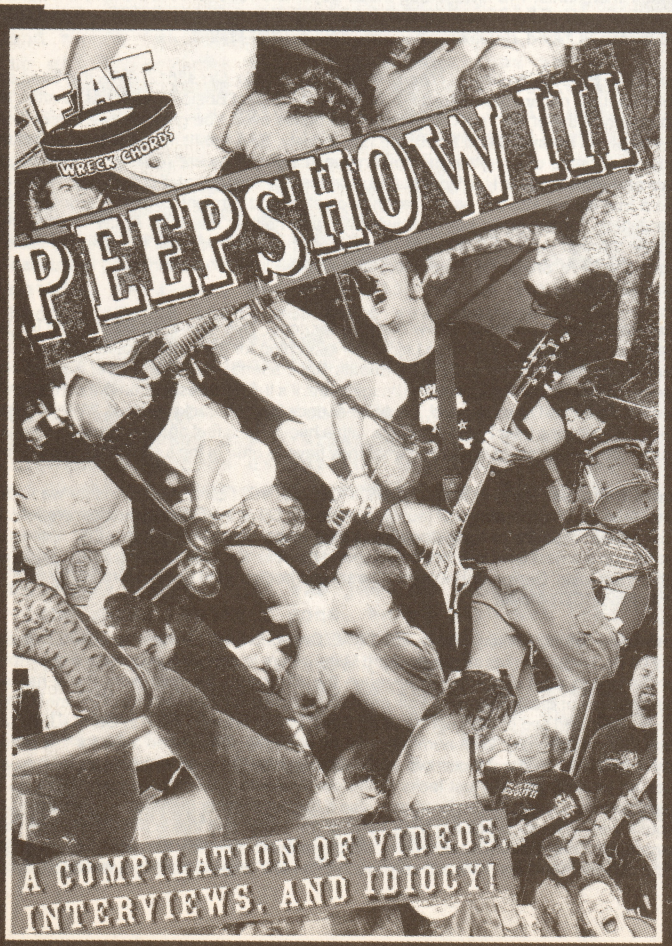

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Another Breath "Not Now, Not Ever" *(Rival, POB 5242, Concord, CA 94524)*. Youth crew structure and early '80s Hardcore momentum are coated with melodic sheen on this full-length from Another Breath. Heavily streamlined in approach, the upbeat (albeit raging) chord progressions and strong shout-along sensibilities lend spirit to the token build/breakdown scheme, nonetheless. Another Breath's sturdy, layered musicianship outfits their time-honored style with an anthemic quality heard all too seldom within this format. Not bad. (CD)-**Ramek**

The Arsons "Bridges Down" *(Mad At the World, POB 20227, Tompkins Square Station New York, NY 10009)* .Hardcore and Pop Punk seldom interact with favorable results, and this record proves it. Though they share members with the revered (but now defunct) Grey Area, who in the course of their brief existence achieved an excellent middle-ground between straight forward NYHC crunch and more melodic leanings, The Arsons represent a comparatively tepid and subdued version of that outfit. If Kid Dynamite had been stripped of their speed and aggression, the end result would sound something like this. Glossy, stifled, uninteresting. (CD)-**Ramek**

The Arsons "Bridges Down" *(Mad at the World, POB 20227, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009)*. The Arsons remind me of a musically underdeveloped Bouncing Souls circa *Maniacal Laughter* with the lyrical maturity of the latest album. They're fun and logical at the same time, which reminds me of H2O or the Bouncing Souls a few years back. They even write songs paying homage to their friends and have similar sounding basslines and guitar solos. The Arsons **do** have their unique sound, don't get me wrong—they're just very easily compared to the Souls. (CD)-**Cain**

Artimus Pyle "Fucked From Birth" *(Prank, POB 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141)*. Gloom-laden Crust/Thrash with raging drive. Walls of start-and-stop clamor evoke an ominous undercurrent in these hymns of unrest from Artimus Pyle. Corrosive guitar spasms and bass-heavy murk merge for a melee much in the spirit of His Hero Is Gone and Catharsis. By far the most technically accomplished and violently unsettling offering in the Artimus Pyle repertoire, *Fucked From Birth* plows forth with jittery unpredictability. The upheaval here seems always on the verge of total collapse, and this unstrung sensibility is captured with skill by Dan Rathburn at Polymorph Studios. In this conveyance of a dark and claustrophobic vision of modern life, Artimus Pyle present what is surely one of the finest records of the year. Life's futile struggle is lamented and eviscerated by the wild fits of down tuned chaos herein. (CD)-**Ramek**

Awesome Animal Ambulance "'This Is Sour'-Lemon Peel" (*Aurora Seven, POB 890004, Weymouth, MA 02189*). Remember that Electro-Nu-Pop that graced the soundtracks of Sega Genesis video games like *Phantasy Star 2* and *Sonic the Hedgehog*? I always loved that stuff (I would make tapes of it!) and I guess other people did, too, 'cause this CD sounds like said video game music with vocals. If Britney Spears sounded like this, I'd be a huge fan. Tina Randall's smooth girlish vocals are actually a nice complement to the electronic noodling melodies. Their next album promises to document "the fictional battle of good versus evil as the Awesome Animal Ambulance protect their homeland against a greedy ruler." I can't wait! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Bad Religion "The Empire Strikes First" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. The biggest thing that this album proves is that Bad Religion needs major strife in the world to record a good album. The world is going to total shit under the "leadership" of his highness, Emperor Adolf W. Bush, and Bad Religion just needed the ammo. This is their most powerful album in years; at times the band has been too intellectual for their own good, losing direction in the more peaceful late '90s, but there is no mistaking them now. They are pissed off and they have a whole lot to say about it. Songs like "Sinister Rouge" and "God's Love" totally destroy the overly-powerful religions in this country, and discuss how those groups really run everything. This is what political Punk is supposed to be: good music with powerful messages that are constructive and based on well-informed opinions, not anti-government bullshit just for the sake of saying "Fuck the USA." This is the kind of album that can renew your belief in this music and the class of people who listen to it. It makes you believe there can be change, and it must start at the bottom. This is an absolute resurrection for Bad Religion. (CD)-**Myk**

Beastie Boys "To the Five Boroughs" *(Capitol, 1750 N. Vine St., Hollywood, CA 90028)*. Normally I wouldn't bother with a release like this. It's pointless and Beastie Boys are huge. I just wanted to take a second and say, this record is awesome. It's a total throwback to their earliest days both lyrically and beat-wise, with the early Def Jam sound and paying tribute to New York the way an underground Hip Hop artist might. They even manage to leave all their politics out of this album and make it a tribute to life for the first time in years. If you dig the old LL albums, Grandmaster Flash, or any of the other "Beat Street" era Hip Hop, you have to check this out. (CD)-**Myk**

Bellmer Dolls "Never Sates Nor Palls" (*Bellmer Dolls, www.bellmerdolls.com*). Like the Birthday Party before them, New York's Bellmer Dolls combine frenzied syncopated rhythms, caveman Blues, drugged-up drunken hazes and female folly into a single statement of beautiful depression. Apocalyptic dreams are not new. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Big In Japan "Who Really Needs a Heart Anyway?" (*Insubordination, POB 2846, Columbia, MD 21045*). I'm perplexed, which is usually a good sign. Anyone who knows me knows that I HATE Pop Punk with enough venom to kill a rhinoceros; yet, somehow I find myself enjoying this. Big In Japan is the brainchild of Zoinks!/Screeching Weasel veteran Zach Damon, who, as this album will attest, is a talented songwriter in this own right. The songs have a *Hard Days Night/Help!* Beatle-esque quality about them which somehow does not come off as completely derivative. And Mr. Damon sings in a normal voice, not that horrible annoying high-pitched Pop Punk whine. In fact, the man has a very good voice, as the band's foray into Pop Psychedelia, "Underwater Expedition," more than adequately displays. Take notes, kids—more Pop Punk should sound like this. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Billy Syndrome "Beyond" *(Slutfish, 327 Bedford Ave. #2, Brooklyn, NY 11211)*. I think I got this guy's last release for review and was thoroughly unimpressed by it. Unfortunately things haven't really changed for the better. It's very DIY, from the music to the artwork; it's kind of like Flipper, just not as good. Some of the tunes are fairly catchy, such as "People Are Crazy" and "Storms That Come and Go," but mostly it's just a thrown-together mess that would be best listened to while tripping on acid—perhaps then I would understand what's going on deep down in the soul of Billy Syndrome. (CD)-**McClernon**

Black Lips! "We Did Not Know the Forest Spirit Made the Flowers Grow" *(Bomp, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. On their sizzlin' out-of-control sophomore effort, the Black Lips once again unleash a turbulent cyclone of full-on blurred noise that screams like glass shattering on a sun-baked slab of concrete. Drenched in a psychopathic caterwaul of screeching distortion and amplified, booze-fueled fury, each of these songs is a disruptive, gut-twisting show of pure jagged-edged musical insanity. It's a trembling, shivering, ass-shaking Garage Rock meltdown with a voodoo, demon-blazing Swamp Blues edge that's sure to tempt the flesh, torment the soul, and ravage the spirit until Judgement Day. Black Lips, I'm yours. (CD)-**Moser**

The Blinding Light "The Ascension Attempt" *(Deathwish, Inc., 32 Congress St., Salem, MA 01970)*. More than anything this release reminds me of Converge, and while I admit I haven't always enjoyed the latter's material, I'm really into this. Total insanity rules this disc, with a double-bass drum attack and metallic guitar riffs nailing the point home. Listening to the Blinding Light gives me the same feeling I get when I hear Slayer, like having a metal spike drilled right into my forehead—but in a good way. There's a chaotic energy throughout the disc that enters the soul of the listener, and when it's all over, you feel nothing but release. *The Ascension Attempt* is for those who welcome pain as a necessary emotion. (CD)-**McClernon**

Blonde Redhead "Misery Is A Butterfly" *(4AD, 625 Broadway 12th Fl, New York, NY 10012)*. Metamorphosis... Mother nature`s gift is a change and advancement in a species. In the case of Blonde Redhead, a further development of their sonic palette has occurred, and *Misery Is A Butterfly* is the gift they have come forth bearing. On their six full-lengths this trio of pre-hip New York revival art rockers have matured past the minimalist atonal dissonance of their earlier work to a style that utilizes each sound sparingly and distinctly. *Misery Is A Butterfly* places the melancholic vocals of Kazu Makino and Amedeo Pace against a miasma of organic, sequenced, sounds and dense layers of guitar arpeggios and harmonics. *Misery Is A Butterfly* is the sound of a band comfortable in an endless space of its own creation. (CD)-**Andriani**.

Blood Duster *(Seasons of Mist, POB 29364, Philadelphia, PA 19125)*. Fuck yeah! It's all about Blood Duster. This is Blood Duster's fourth release here in the States and they are still the kings of disturbing Metal, although they've really expanded their range on this album. There are lots of clean vocals and a real move into the realm of Stoner Rock. This makes their songs oddly melodic, but still painful at times with the blastbeats and feedback. A good amount of the tracks are still the gut-ripping Grindcore that one expects from these splatter merchants. I've always dug these guys, and recommended them, because as Grindcore goes, these guys are the most fun you are going to find while listening to vocals about entrails, blood, drugs and mass murderers. (CD)-**Myk**

Blood For Blood "Serenity…" *(Thorp, POB 6786, Toledo, OH 43612)*. Why this band ever broke up, I will never know. Blood For Blood is of the best Boston bands has to offer, and is probably in the of the Top Ten best Boston bands ever. You get nine new tracks and a new label. As always, Blood For Blood has a nasty, SFA meets Sheer Terror sound that conveys a hatred of everything and everyone in sight. They are realists, so their vocals, lyrics and working class Hardcore sound prominently display that. Songs like "Live the Lie" give a true insight into the band's feelings on style and Straight Edge in Hardcore. Their true disdain for humanity has not dwindled, and neither has their ability to show their attitude through punishing '80's style Hardcore. If you find yourself listening to Hatecore bands like SFA, Sheer Terror, Poison Idea and the like, Blood For Blood is an absolute must. (CD)-**Myk**

Blue Rose Liar "Sycamore" *(www.blueroseliar.com)*. This nine-song effort is not too bad at all, though it seems Blue Rose Liar is still searching for their exact sound. The music is somewhere between the early '90's Seattle Rock sound, Metal, and *Fuel For the Hate Game*-era Hot Water Music. Hard to imagine, but it's the best description I've come up with thus far. As far as I'm concerned, the band sounds best on tracks such as "With Interest," which incorporates their HWM influence with a heavy Rock feel and yields positive results. A band with potential; I'd like to see what they have to offer in the future. (CD)-**McClernon**

Boots & Braces "Made In Ku'Au" *(DSS, POB 739, 4021 Linz, Austria)*. Here we have a boisterous and lively outburst of jaunty, ale-swilling Oi! of the German/Austrian variety. It's a festive atmosphere of boot-stomping, chant-along sonic hooliganism that makes me wanna hop the next boat to Europe and spend the rest of my life guzzling warm, dark beer with my fun-lovin' Germanic brethren. Cheers and bottles up to Boots & Braces for doin' my ears proud! (CD)-**Moser**

Borknagar "Epic" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. *Epic* may be Borknagar's most straightforward Metal album to date. In a way that's a good thing, but it's also is a bit of a letdown because the albums of the past were these majestic combinations of Black Metal and Folk music that comes from having one of the most stellar lineups ever and two of the best vocalists Black Metal has ever seen in Garm (Ulver) and Simen (Dimmu Borgir). With numerous lineup changes, it has been a job for the band to stay at that level. Without those two available anymore, the band turned to Vintersorg who does an admiral job, but just lacks in the clean vocal department in comparison to his predecessors. Losing Tyr on bass was also a hit, but another member of Vintersorg filled in quite well. Oystein is still the back bone of the band, and this is the reason they have managed to keep their musical identity, but the material definitely focuses on the strengths of the current members. I am still very much a fan of this band and if you liked *Empiricism*

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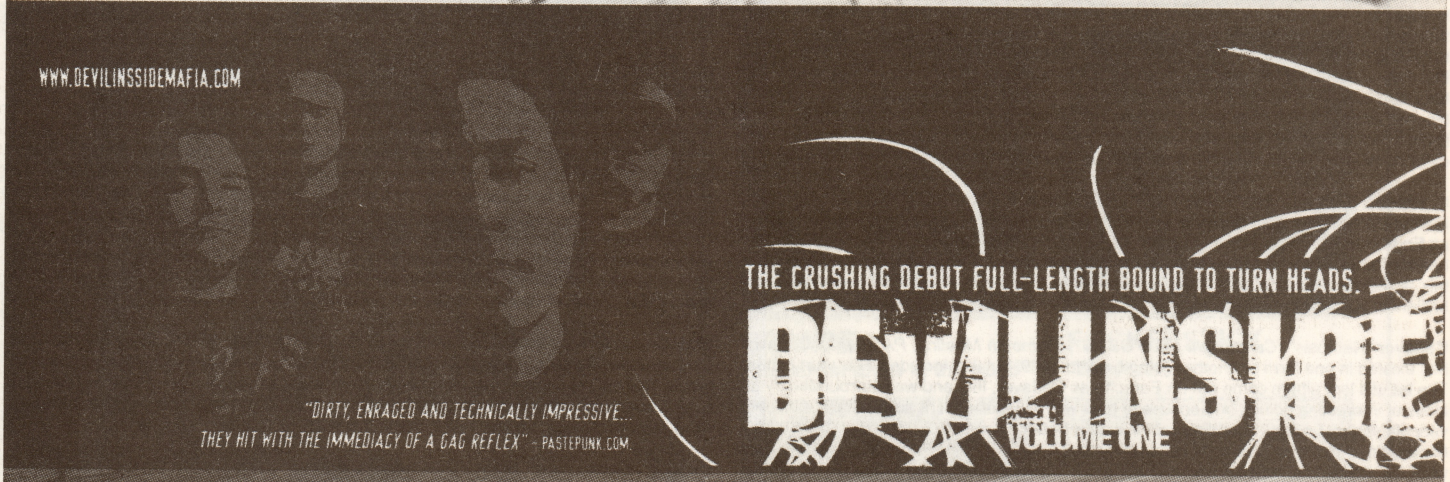
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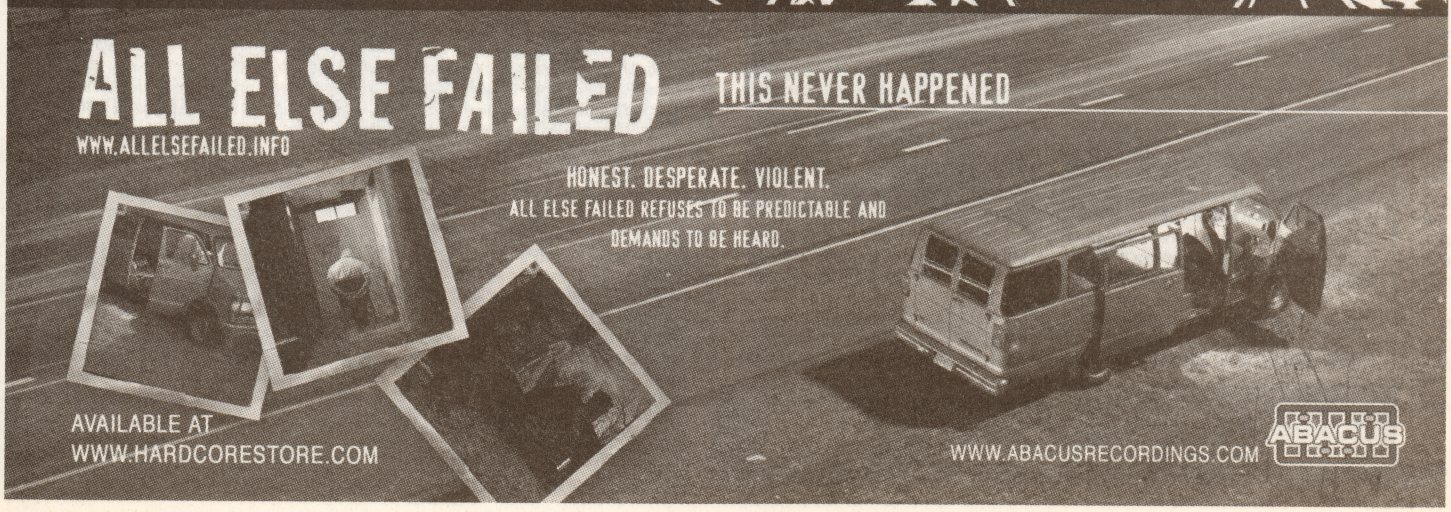
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you should have no problem with this either. I just long for the sheer originality of the early lineups which produced some of my favorite Black Metal albums of all time. (CD)-**Myk**

The Briefs "Sex Objects" *(BYO, POB 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067).* It's summer, and I sit here watching a group of squirrels giddily frolic in the grass and speedily scurry round and round the various tree trunks that dot my mom's front lawn. It seems almost as if the fuzzy, lil' bushy-tailed critters are being energetically fueled by the outrageously addictive sounds currently radiating from my loudly booming stereo speakers. *Sex Objects* (The Briefs' third full-length release) is a hair-raising bundle of euphoric nervous energy… spastic, twitchy, and abundantly electric. Each of these 14 titillating tunes combines zany New Wave flamboyance with early '80s-style Punk bombast that unabashedly brings a warm, glowing happiness into my heart I haven't experienced since I was a teenager and eagerly guzzled my very first six pack of beer. The musicianship is frantic, harried, and ultimately uplifting, and the vocalist belts out a sputtering litany of lyrics like a brain-damaged epileptic who's being zapped in the testicles with a fully-charged cattle prod. The Briefs are obvious direct descendants of the Buzzcocks, The Weirdos, Elvis Costello, and The Adicts, and you can bet your entire life savings that *Sex Objects* will be considered a full-fledged Punk classic for many generations to come. (CD)-**Moser**

The Briggs "Leaving the Ways" (*SideOneDummy, POB 2350, Los Angeles, CA 90078*). Let me put it this way: The Briggs aren't bad, they're just way too derivative of what's come in the past 25 years to be any good. With the exception of one Offspring-style generic Hardcore song, this CD reeks of '80's Oi, Rancid and the Clash, none of which I like. However, if you like that stuff, you'll probably like this, so I suppose it's worth a shot. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Burning Bridges "Leave No Ashes" *(www.burningbridges.com).* Burning Bridges formed in 1996 when two members of Juliard collaborated. This Garage Rock band has shared the stage with the White Stripes, Audioslave, and Queens of the Stone Age. Leave No Ashes was produced by George Prakoulious who also produced the Black Crowes and Tom Petty. Burning Brides write very buoyant and Indie inspired songs. Take Cheap Trick and ZZ Top, mix equal parts, the outcome: Burning Brides. (CD)-**Cain**

Burning Image "1983-1987" (*Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141*). Having been to Bakersfield, California, I know from experience that anything creative originating in such a vacuous wasteland would have to be wholly different and original. The town is a desert fueled by oil and crystal meth. With that in mind, it makes sense that Burning Image would hail from such a place. As part of the *Reissues of Necessity Series*, Alternative Tentacles has compiled the band's long-sought-after 7," demo tape and some impressive new tracks. I hear a heavy UK Decay influence (dual vocals) and some Killing Joke (tribal drums), but through American eyes a la Christian Death. The schizophrenic song structures of 45 Grave and the Sex Gang Children are also apparent. Hopefully more kids will buy this and realize there's more to life that your typical Oi and Crusty formulas. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

C. AARME *(Burning Heart/Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* Abrasive, in-your-face Punk very reminiscent of the sounds of early Bad Brains and Black Flag, though their press release says the band has never listened to either. I don't find this hard to believe based on musical similarities, I just find it hard to believe there's a band out there that has never heard either. This is a very bass-heavy recording (about time it isn't the forgotten instrument), and C.AARME's self-titled debut flies by like an out of control car, blasting its nostalgic feel all over the road in 15 tracks played in under half an hour. This is old school Punk recorded with an old school feel; C.AARME might not be familiar with older American Hardcore/Punk bands, but they certainly identify with them. (CD)-**KevTV**

C. AARME *(Burning Heart/ Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* Now **this** is what I like to hear from Sweden. This band, whose symbols cannot even be created on an English keyboard, sound so much like Minor Threat and Black Flag, yet, they've never heard of band. They say "We just wanted to play fast and hard without deeper analysis, and this is the way it came out." This, ladies and gentlemen is why I love Sweden—pure brilliance. (CD)-**Cain**

Cadaver "Necrosis" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462).* Cadaver has existed in one form or another going back to 1989, but that includes a six year hiatus. The band's last album came out on Earache as Cadaver, Inc. and was surrounded by all kinds of interesting goings on because of their weird website full of autopsies. Cadaver is very old school Bathory sounding with a slightly better recording. I have to say that I think the drummer is a little weak and his drum sound is the pits, but the songs aren't bad. For what it's worth, with several bands playing this style of Metal again, I prefer bands like Khold, Carpathian Forest, and 1349 to this Cadaver album. It isn't bad, I'm just not blown away. (CD)-**Myk**

Candiria "What Doesn't Kill You…" *(Type A, 130 W. 42nd St., Suite 909, New York, NY 10036).* I've listened to this record a number of times now and I'm still unsure how I feel about it. I hadn't heard Candiria in years, but I remember them being a lot heavier, with Jazz-like undertones throughout their music. While at times *What Doesn't Kill You…* **does** get seriously heavy (and jazzy, as in the instrumental "Rutherford Experiment"), it mostly just stays at a midtempo NYHC pace, with a bit of crunch and vocals that are sung more than I would have expected. There's even a touch of melody here, which might surprise some of the band's more ardent fans. I'm definitely teetering in the middle of the road on this one, but if you're a proponent of the NYHC sound or a supporter of Candiria's earlier material, then I'd say take a listen. (CD)-**McClernon**

Carcass "Choice Cuts" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018).* If you are a long time Carcass fan, you can do without this. It's a best of put together by Ken Owen that was supposed to be released like five years ago before his health declined. It features a 13 track "best of" and then both of the Peel Sessions, which were also previously released. It is kind of cool to have both of those on one CD though, and the other tracks make it a very full documentation of Carcass' career. Carcass just never struck me as a band where people would say, "I just need a best of" like they would with someone like Elton John. Either you like Carcass or you don't—actually it's usually more like you **worship** Carcass or you don't. This is well worth the investment if you don't have the hard to find Peel Sessions; otherwise, it's kind of pointless. (CD)-**Myk**

Cari Clara "Miniature American Society" *(Tiberius, 4280 Catalpa Dr., Independence, KY 4105).* Cari Clara is very serene, quiet, and is quite brilliant. The songs build up anticipation and have that climax, much like Radiohead. With steady tempos, melodic guitar riffs, and vocals almost identical to Tom Yorke's, this band has to be heard. Cari Clara pushes the boundaries of songwriting. The songs are haunting with synth beats and chilling percussions. It's both artistic and harmonious. There is nothing better. (CD)-**Cain**

Carnal Forge "Aren't You Dead Yet?" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* It seems more and more often these days that bands have no staying power. Whether it is the fan favorite reason of "musically progressing" or just the fact that a lot of bands are one trick ponies is in doubt, but the fact is few bands can release high-quality albums past their second effort. This is not the case with Carnal Forge. While their fifth album, *Aren't You Dead Yet?* isn't the sheer sonic attack that was *Who's Gonna Burn?*, it is a more powerful effort than you will find from most bands. This is a signature Carnal Forge recording with punishing drums and vocals that are growled, yet have a very distinct higher pitch than those from most Sweden Metal bands. As always, the guitar prowess is beyond reproach. Melodies are a signature of Swedish Death Metal and this band continues to be at the forefront of their abilities. The CD also features a couple of computer videos. Carnal Forge is still one of the top bands out of Gothenburg. (CD)-**Myk**

Carrier *(Hideaway, www.carriercarrier.com).* Featuring Marc Benning of 34 Satellite and the drummer of The Flaming Lips this is a melancholy, down-home album with rich production. This wouldn't be suitable background music to a party—unless you're having one of those trendy "quiet parties"—but it would be fine for home listening and walks around the neighborhood, a la Travis' *The Man Who*. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Cathedral "Serpent's Gold" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018).* Yet another band has graced us with a greatest hits album.... yet another band that probably doesn't need a "greatest hits" because no one who listens to 'em is saying, "Should I get this album, or that one? Hmmm, I'll just get the greatest hits instead." This happens to be a two disc set, with the first disc being a greatest hits, and I will say that this CD is really well put together as the track listing goes. The real gem is the second disc. It features 12 tracks of which 11 are unreleased live songs, demos and even a Witchfinder General cover of "Rabies". Any Cathedral fan will need this just for the second disc, just think of it as a buy one get one free type thing; buy the unreleased stuff and get the sampler as a bonus. Cathedral is still one of the bands at the forefront of the Black Sabbath/'70's inspired Rock movement, and you will not be disappointed with this either. (CD)-**Myk**

Cerberus Shoal "Bastion of Itchy Preeves" *(North East Indie, POB. 10315, Portland, ME 04104).* You have to have real patience to listen to this..and if you're in the right mood, this is an amazing disc. Try to imagine a really mellow Zappa combined with an off-Broadway musical. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Chaosbreed "Unleashed Carnage" *(Crash, 4025 E. Chandler Blvd, Suite 701B-3, Phoenix, AZ 85048)* and "Brutal" *(Olympic, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* These guys released two CDs in less than a year. *Unleashed…* came first and is an EP on Crash. *Brutal* is a full-length on Olympic. Musically, these two CDs are very similar, probably because of the close proximity of their release dates. What I hear instantly upon putting these discs on is a whole lot of *Scream Bloody Gore* era Death. The band features ex-members of The Black League, Gandalf and Amorphis, so you can tell they are Death Metal pedigree. The records on both albums are very raw. Not Darkthrone raw, but as most Death Metal these days goes, it isn't nearly as polished as most. If you were a fan of the early Combat Records and the early SPV German Thrash bands, this will very much appeal to you—especially track three on *Brutal* called "Faces of Death" which sounds exactly like "South of Heaven" musically. (CD)-**Myk**

Clair De Lune "Marionettes" *(Deep Elm, POB. 36939, Charlotte , NC 28236-6939).* Clair De Lune have a great upbeat sound and a mix of Influences— from Black Heart Procession meets Trail of Dead meets later Milemarker. The opening track really showcases Claire De Lune's sound, as the piano and bass lay down a foundation and the lead guitar adds an extra layer of melody. I highly recommend this (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Classic Case "It's Been Business Doing Pleasure With You" *(Lowband, www.classiccase.net).* Featuring former members of Sound of Speed and Glassjaw, Classic Case is both an experienced and interesting band. With fans in Brand New and touring done alongside Puddle of Mudd, it's obvious that labels and other industry folk are interested in this band. But in the meantime, this five-song EP is emotive Rock with buildups and powerful melodies. Frontman Jared Draughon often resembles Mike Patton with his in-the-moment vocals while he and guitarist Mitchell Marlow switch between acoustic and electric guitars. This is smart music for the masses. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Coastal Drag "Caught on the Wrist" *(Doubling Cube, POB 1855, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10019).* Remember when Indie Rock was interesting and could still be considered, umm, Rock? Well if not, look no further than Coastal Drag, who thrust upon the public one hell of an EP. The six songs here remind me of a mixture of early Soul Asylum and the Pixies, a great combination, making me wonder why more bands don't try and emulate either group more often. I think what appeals to me so much about this band (and record), is that they cast aside any notion of what's popular today or what might appeal to the mass audience; they simply plugged in, shredded their guitars, and beat the hell out of the drums. The end result is what we have here, take it or leave it. (CD)-**McClernon**

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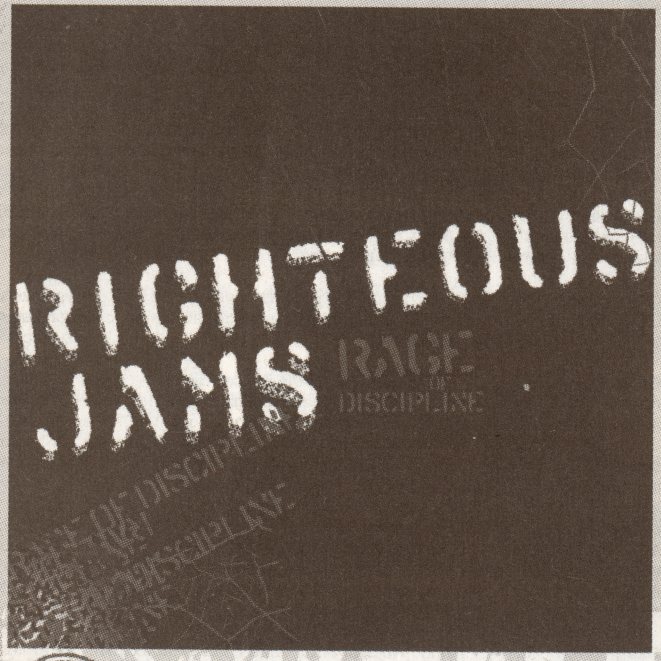

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The Code "Rhetoric of Reason" *(Jump Start, POB 10296, State College, PA 16805).* As a follow-up to their debut album on A-F, the Code deliver a four-song EP that seems infinitely better than their previous release. Maybe it's that I can only take this band in small doses, but I'll give The Code the benefit of the doubt and chalk it up to the fact that they've refined their sound a bit. They still seem to like Ska unfortunately, and continue to feel the need to inject it into a good Punk song, which make them sound like an Against All Authority knock-off. They do, however, contribute a stellar version of Op Ivy's "Unity," which made me search through my place for *Energy* right away. (CD)**-McClernon**

Coffin Lids "Rock N' Roll" *(Bomp, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).* With a vocalist who sounds a lot like a ghoulish, meth-wrecked Ray Charles, the Coffin Lids specialize in sweaty, gritty, and trashy Garage Rock n' Roll burliness with a lo-fi horror-boogie edge. A manic maelstrom of stripped-down, volcanic guitar riffs uncontrollably broils and rampages in an unrelenting, voluminous blast of bass and drum rhythms. And it's all frenetically driven along by the sporadic, spine-shivering flashiness of a spooky, house-haunting Farfisa organ. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if the Coffin Lids are actually cannibalistic hearse mechanics who work the graveyard shift only during a full moon. "One Foot In the Grave," "Nite of the Zombies," "On the Loose," "Supercharger," "Vampire Girl," "Eye On You," and "Smokin' Monkey" are just seven of the 14 terror-wreaking tracks that's sure to get you twistin' and stompin' like Herman Munster on steroids. Crazy, man, crazy! (CD)**-Moser**

Coheed and Cambria "In Keeping Secrets In Silent Earth: 3" *(Equal Vision, with Columbia Records-flavored filling).* This disc has been out for a couple of months and was recently re-issued trough Columbia Records. Columbia seems to be pretty high up on Coheed's ability to make a move to the top of the Rock game. The reissue is supposedly coming with a bonus disc of live songs, but hey, this promo issue didn't come with said disc, so I really have nothing new to review except the new label on the back and the "FBI Protected" stamp and encryption. That's some nifty-looking seal. All official and well designed. I wish that the FBI protected me. I'd change my name to Homer Thompson and live on a riverboat. (CD)**- KevTV**

Coliseum *(Level Plane, POB 7926 Charlottesville, VA 22906).* I was interested in this CD at first just based on the label. My somewhat recent interest in Neil Perry's two-disc anthology made me realize just how many bands and labels are out there that I am just simply unaware of. Coliseum's debut full-length features Ryan Patterson, formerly of Black Cross and is more musically in step with classic aggressive bands. Fuzzy and fast, Coliseum's noise is what Motorhead would be if Lemmy was raised on a strict diet of Black Flag and whiskey as opposed to whiskey and whiskey. (CD)**-KevTV**

Coliseum *(Level Plane, POB 7926 Charlottesville, VA 22906).* This is a surprising turn for Ryan Patterson, vocalist for the angular, melodic Black Cross. His latest project, entitled Coliseum, provides an unexpected excursion into driving D-beat Crust/Rock territory. Indeed, the band effectively bridges a gap between the time-honored, grime-ensconced Dis-assault and mid-tempo Motorhead blare with notable skill. An exceptional lyrical slant chronicles mental instability, desolation, and despair, while dense riff sprawl, percussive blur, and hostile bellows engender a mammoth aural offensive. Rumbling forward at a relentless pace, the rollicking uproar is rife with melodic leads that heighten the underlying musical might. Very highly recommended. (CD)**-Ramek**

The Collisions "Talk Is the New Action" *(Windjam, www.windjam.com).* Now this is what I like to hear: good music. The Collisions are an Art Punk power trio from Boston who blend so many influences, I don't know where to start. I mean, I hear Sonic Youth and the Fall, as well as the MC5, the Gun Club, and the Jesus Lizard. They even cover Robert Johnson's "Me and the Devil Blues" for good measure. Nice. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

Complete Control "Reaction" *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221).* Another shocker in this batch of CDs. This band is pretty fucking good; think NOFX's *Longest Line* EP. The vocals might take some getting used to, as they sound like they were recorded at half speed. I got used to them after four songs though. Dingy, fast guitars, pick scrapes, loud choruses, fast rhythm section. It's Punk Rock, and it makes me smile. These guys are on a pretty long tour, and I'd suggest seeing them.(CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

Concrete Blonde "Self-Titled" / "Free" *(Superfecta, 7095 Hollywood Blvd #802, Hollywood, CA 90028).* I was just sent two of Concrete Blonde's digitally remastered albums, re-released onto CDs. Well, I'd say it sounds a lot better than their earlier recording of the two albums, but I was only one year old when in 1986, so I can't really compare these to the originals. But, so you know, Concrete Blonde's albums are digitally remastered and on CD format now. (CD)**-Cain**

Craft "Terror Propaganda" *(Moribund, 530-A 19th St., Port Townsend, WA 98368).* The album cover looks like it should be a Darkthrone release. The music doesn't sound exactly like Darkthrone, but you know what these are going for. I would get into the lyrics, but they only printed select passages in the booklet so the best I can tell you is that these guys are looking for a nuclear holocaust to wipe out humanity. Aside from that, you have a very classic sounding Black Metal album. No keyboards, a grinding guitar sound, and extremely guttural growls. Mikael's vocals are a cross between early Sigh, Burzum and Darkthrone, and 100% evil. The weak point for this band is their drummer. I'm not sure if he is lacking in talent or they just wrote very mediocre drumlines for these songs, but the drums are very uninteresting. Once again though, Moribund has found a band that will appeal to their listener. Fans of previous releases like Sargeist should find this right up their alley, both musically and ideologically. (CD)**-Myk**

Crowpath "Old Cuts and Blunt Knives" *(Robotic Empire, POB 4211, Richmond, VA 23220).* I'm always impressed with the artwork for Robotic Empire releases, which are consistently unique and creative. Unfortunately the same can't be said for the music portion, especially in the case of Crowpath. I'll be the first to admit this band doesn't fall into my area of expertise, but Crowpath comes off like a whole lot of discordant noise, and not in the good, Locust kind of way. I guess they'd fall into the technical Metal genre, but there's nothing remotely impressive about their material that makes it stand out, either from the genre itself or from one song to the next on *Old Cuts…* (CD)**-McClernon**

The C*nts "Eat My Nuts" *(Disturbing, 3238 S. Racine, Chicago, IL 60608).* Hmm... the C*nts (their asterisk, not mine) are quite a moist, tasty treat (groans heard for miles). Much as the Queers include no homosexuals within the ranks (at least not to my knowledge), there seem to be no women in the C*nts. What we do have here is very sloppily played early '80's-influenced Punk Rock (much like the early Queers material with Wimpy at the helm), the kind of stuff that you'd hear on the original *Killed By Death* comps by obscure bands that would vanish by the time you picked up the record. The recording is shoddy at best, with piercing feedback emanating from the speakers, as well as the recording getting louder and softer in the middle of any given song. More people than not will probably find it irritating, but I think it gives the overall record a bit of charm. For those of you who like your Punk aged 20 years or more, I think you'll really get a kick out of this. As for you who lack an appreciation of nostalgia and think the past should remain as such, best spend your money elsewhere. (CD)**-McClernon**

Darlington "All The Wrong Moves" *(Whoa Oh, 21-36 43rd St. ,Astoria, NY 11105).* Pop Punk really bores me, but this is decent. If I had to compare it to something else, I'd say it sounds like all other Pop Punk. (CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Darlington "Euthanize Me" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).* Recycled riffs, poor Musicianship, and awful songs. I hate to bash a band that has good ideals, but, this is pretty awful. (CD)**-Thee Republicrat**

Guttermouth "Eat Your Face" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* Another band that sounds like NOFX. The music itself is pretty good, but this shit gets very annoying after a few songs. (CD)**-Thee Republicrat**

Deadsoil "Forever The Enemy" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27449).* Deadsoil is a band made up of all ex-members. The only thing is, the only band I had previously heard of was Night In Gales. I want to call this Thugcore, it's so fucking hard, but this is even another step farther than bands like 25 Ta Life and Crown of Thornz went. This is like a 25 Ta Life 45 played at 33 and has had the guitar player from Kreator added for melodies and the singer for Vader do voice overs. This is pure brutality that only brings one thing to mind: the pure annihilation of anybody within arm's length. It's bands like this that renew my faith in heavy music every time. (CD)**-Myk**

Death Angel "The Art of Dying" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA 90250).* The first album from Death Angel in 14 years is essential Thrash that harkens back to the mid '80's when Metallica ruled the Metal world (Kirk Hammett actually recorded Death Angel's demo tape in 1986, helping them get their first record deal with Enigma). Though I'm not really familiar with Death Angel's previous work, if *The Art of Dying* is any indication, the band has not missed a step over the decade that they went without playing together, and it's a shame that we've been without a record of this magnitude for so long. (CD)**-McClernon**

Death Threat "Now Here Fast!"*(Triple Crown, 331 West 57th St. #472, New York, NY 10019). Now Here Fast!* is the fourth release for this New England outfit. They rock a very traditional East Coast Hardcore sound, and yes, they do it well. Although the tough guy themes are unable to get me fired up, I have to admit that this is a fine Hardcore album. The one thing that this lacks is a good scream as it's just straight ahead singing, but that's a breath of fresh air considering the amount of annoying, untalented screamers out there polluting the genre. (CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

Deathstars "Synthetic Generation" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Okay, get this: take a member of Dissection (the one from Sweden, not the '80's band) take two members from Swordmaster, put them in a studio and get Anders from In Flames to record them and guess what you get? A band that sounds like Rammstein and looks like the Murder Dolls. I'm totally infatuated with this band. It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever—both the fact that they sound like this, or that I even gave *Synthetic Generation* a minute of my life. This is so out in leftfield, but it really has the Industrial/Techno sound, and even the doom and gloom vocals of Rammstein (though the lyrics are in English). The bondage kids should love this. Deahstars even did a video that is so bizarre I didn't want to blink for fear of missing something bizarre. If nothing else, I have to give these guys credit for not doing music that people like me expected, and doing their own thing. This is so fucking weird! (CD)**-Myk**

Deathstars "Synthetic Generation" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 West El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Usually I love everything Swedish. The Swedish fish, Ikea, etc. This band, Deathstars, on the other hand, I do **not** love. In fact, I'm scared of them. Take Marilyn Manson and Rammstein times three, and it equals Deathstars. Maybe their Industrial Synth Metal sound needs to stay in Sweden—we don't need any more of their kind here. Scary. (CD)**-Cain**

Derringer "A Rock and Roll Tragedy" (*Zero Velocity, www.zerovelocityrecords.com*). I hate to say it, but Derringer comes off like a failed experiment, an attempt to combine elements of Hardcore, Emo, Thrash and Metal prowess into one pot and see what happens. Unfortunately, the result is incredibly dull, generic and predictable, obviously the product of folks who have yet to expand their musical boundaries. Next. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

Destroyed By Anger "2004 Sampler" *(www.destroyedbyanger.com).* The last time I heard about these guys, they were on the Vulture label that put out the Suffocation EP *Despise the Sun*. They really haven't changed much. They play the style of Hardcore that became popular after Biohazard hit big. Big, heavy crunching guitar powerchords. Throaty vocals ala Sub-Zero and progressions that are structured so there will always be a beatdown at some point during the song. The recording on this is really good, especially making the drums sound big and room-filling. If you dig bands like Irate, Merauder, and Skarhead,

there is a real good chance that you will dig these guy as well. (CD)-**Myk**

Die Romantik (*Die Romantik Music, www.dieromantikmusic.com*). Die Romantik is an odd combination of Jazz drumming, classically trained keyboard work a la Chopin and Radiohead's ethereal guitar. The first two songs on this six song EP come off like extremely morbid cocktail music, while the last four songs range from the louder, guitar-heavy Radiohead to the spacier more mellow Radiohead. Fans of (you guessed it!) Radiohead will either like this or be appalled by all the direct swipes from the Thom Yorke songbook. Personally, I'm neutral. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Dimlaia (*Life Is Abuse, POB 20524, Oakland, CA 94620*). Dimlaia plays dark, heavy symphonic Stoner Metal like that of *Souls at Zero* Neurosis. In fact, most of this CD sounds EXACTLY like Neurosis, even down to the vocals. Dave Edwardson (bassist of Neurosis) mixed and did some additional recording. This is a perfectly good CD, except for the fact that THERE ALREADY IS A NEUROSIS! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Dismember "Where Iron Crosses Grow" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462).* Dismember is one of those bands that seemed to lose their way just a bit with their last couple of offerings. Not that they weren't good, they weren't great. The last couple of albums weren't as heavy and weren't as technical as their earlier recordings and I think it left people feeling a little short. On this new album, the band has refocused and recorded a more primal album closer to their albums of old. Dismember was on par with contemporaries like Entombed in sound, but I think in an effort to not sound like anyone else, Dismember lost what made them special. They play technical and very heavy Swedish Death Metal like it was 1990 all over again, and that's what you get on this album. (CD)-**Myk**

Dokken "Hell to Pay" *(Sanctuary, 1976 East High St, Pottstown, PA 19464).* How the mighty have fallen! I really like the first three albums this band did. I saw them probably half a dozen times over the years, but this CD sounds exactly like what it is: a bunch of has beens trying to stay vital, and only providing half of what they once were. Don's voice is just there, no fluctuations like in the old days. That was his trademark, and if he can't do it anymore, then don't. By the way, this new logo and album cover probably are on the list with Attacker as biggest mistakes ever; rough-looking colored pencils used to be a staple for demo cassettes, not album covers, and this one just looks bad. (CD)-**Myk**

Dolour "Old New Friends" (*Dolour, www.dolour.com*). Looks like Dolour is a vehicle for Shane Tutmarc's singer/songwriter "talents," a term I use loosely. Quite frankly, *Old New Friends* is some of the most nauseating Indie Pop garbage I've ever heard, an obvious product of the Williamsburg hipster contingent. I'm not especially fond of sweet things, and this CD is the musical equivalent of a pixie stick. Blah. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Electro Cured *(Cleopatra, PMB 251, 13428 Maxella Ave., Marina Del Rey, CA 90202).* When I saw this CD in the heap of CDs, I was excited. The Cure, covered by Electro bands. It made sense. Then I played it and realized that this is my least favorite Cure tribute album. Maybe it's because this is my least favorite type of music, or the fact that they chose the worst songs to cover. Or, it could be the poor interpretation of the Cure's brilliance. Whether one or all of the above, I now know that it's actually possible to destroy the Cure's songs. I never would have guessed! (CD)-**Cain**

The End "Within Dividia" *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd., Upper Darby, PA 19082).* Comparing these guys to Dillinger Escape Plan is the obvious and way too easy way out. The End is so much more than that. I would venture to say that The End is the most melodic Grindcore band you may ever hear. The vocals are right off a Phobia album and the music is like Circle of Dead Children played at Neurosis speed. The drumming on this album is ridiculous, off-time bits with blastbeats and tons of China. The guitars remind me of nothing less than Scott Hull bloodying his fingers on the strings of an AC show. This album is pure chaos and I think the obvious succession to bands like Cephalic Carnage who are just on the other side of Death Metal from what this is. Not to mention that this comes in a stellar digipack—when you open it and put it on end, all the sides of the package create a house on the inside and outside, really amazing. This is the band that went where Today Is the Day would have gone if they stayed closer to their AmRep roots. (CD)-**Myk**

The Entity "Salty" *(Rage Of Achilles/End, 331 Rio Grande #58, Salt Lake City, UT 84101).* I don't know much about these guys other than they are from Norway. This is the epitome of Neo-Classical Metal. Clean vocals, even by clean vocal standards; this guy could be singing Radio Rock if the guitars and progressions were a little less heavy. A lot of the songs are keyboard-driven, but don't sound ridiculous. The songs are long epic ballads that have a range of emotion from Goth Metal to Neo Classical Folk to Depeche Mode-like; this is one band you will never nail down musically. Fans of Katatonia, the Opeth acoustic work, and even some Projekt bands should really enjoy these guys. They are so talented and have really written an album for the love and not the money. (CD)-**Myk**

The Escaped "Rose City Hardcore" *(Blackout!, POB 610, Hoboken, NJ 07030).* Musically, The Escaped are one step above your run of the mill Hardcore band; lyrically, they need to go back to the drawing board. The Escaped sing about their local scene (Portland, Oregon,) personal struggle, being an outcast, staying true, etc., but they go about it the same way a million other bands have before. If you're a fan of redundancy, then this is for you. (CD)-**Thee Republicrat**

The Escaped "Rose City Hardcore" *(Blackout!, POB 610, Hoboken, NJ 07030).* Portland's The Escaped play Hardcore Punk with an adherence both to a fast-paced Metal-free scheme and to a rousing Street Punk-tinged sensibility, as well. No frills chord progressions and vocal howls abound, to the backdrop of hefty shout-along choruses. A distinctive anthemic energy is captured here, straddling a fine line between New York-singed Hardcore and grimier punk sensibilities that have defined the Portland scene for some time. This is an enjoyable debut.(CD)-**Ramek**

The Exit "Home For An Island" *(Some, 345 7th Ave., 24th Fl, New York, NY 10001).* The Exit is a New York based band, blending a mix of genres like '80's Dub and Reggae with '90's Punk and Indie Rock. You would think this mix sounds a lot like Sublime, but of course you'd be wrong. Their style is very similar to the Clash and the Police, but a lot more modern-sounding. They've recently toured with English rockers the Muse, and now have the same booking agent as Le Tigre, The Strokes and Elvis Costello, so you're bound to hear more of them. (CD)-**Cain**

Exploding Fuck Dolls "Crack the Safe" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).* During the early 1990s when Gr*nge was looming large on the horizon like a sluggish lumbering dinosaur, twin brothers/skateboard legends Steve and Art Godoy decided to form an authentic old school Punk band in direct response to the sludgy, hippy Seattle sound permeating the music scene at the time. Thus the Exploding Fuck Dolls were born, and what a clamorous impact they soon began having on the West Coast punk community! This ambitious and exceptional compilation collects 19 snarling, teeth-gnashing EFD tracks from 1991-94 and 1997. Since the group had a virtual revolving door policy when it came to vocalists (and bassists and guitar players, too!), you get the benefit of hearing four entirely different singers belting it out in a fist-flailing flurry of all-out Punk belligerence. There's the bratty, insolent vocalizations of Kevin Edman (who unfortunately died of a heroin overdose a year and a half after the group's formation), the raspy rolling roguery of Duane Peters (yep, the one and only!), the bellowing beach-bum rants of Art Godoy, and, finally, the Joe Strummer-style spit n' splutter of Kris Swanson. Apparently, the Exploding Fuck Dolls have recently reformed (with Kris pulling vocal duties), so here's bettin' that they'll soon be raucously shakin' the timbers of a stage near you. Don't be fool enough to miss 'em, kiddies! *Crack the Safe* is by far one of the most relevant, exciting, and inspiring Punk releases of our time. Take action, and get yours today! (CD)-**Moser**

Far "Water and Solutions and the DVD" *(Immortal, 12200 Olympic Blvd., Suite 400, Los Angeles CA 90064).* This is an essential re-release of Far's *Water and Solutions* , also featuring a DVD that contains six songs from a 1998 concert, two versions of a music video, bootleg live footage, photos, commentary and some Enhanced CD footage. If you missed the disc the first time around, you know what to do… (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Farmer Boys "The Other Side" *(Nuclear Blast, www.nuclearblast.de).* There are certain people who like the music that Nuclear Blast releases, and I'm not one of them. In the case of Farmer Boys, they alternate between '80's style Metal (which I appreciate) and modern-day Linkin Park-esque Metal (which I can tolerate), but songs like "Get Crucified" and "Like Jesus Wept" are a bit much for me. The liner notes make these five guys sound like nice, hard-working people, but I won't be listening to this again if I have my way. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Fighting Dogs *(Ed Walters, no address...).* Gloom-encased Crust and ripping Thrash combine on this agonized fracas, the first official full-length from Fighting Dogs. This record is a worthy follow up to the band's scarce self-released debut, as their brand of savage hammering and searing melody blares forth with force to spare. Apocalyptic lyricism depicts a foreboding vision of a doomed, war-torn civilization, an apt counterpart to the tonal onslaught. Reminiscent of the dramatic tumult of Tragedy, Fighting Dogs succeed in their adoption of those inclinations while adding faster, Scandinavian-influenced flair to the ensuing uproar. The results are both harrowing and memorable. (CD)-**Ramek**

Finntroll "Nattfodd" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Here is a big warning right up front: if you are looking for straight Black Metal, you will absolutely hate this band. This is a cross between Sigh (*Hail Horror Hail* era), World Inferno/Friendship Society, Jethro Tull, and Cruachen. The music is all over the place using Black Metal, themes that sound like they should come from a *Hellraiser* film, and then parts that sound like the soundtrack to the Hobbiton scene in *Lord of the Rings*. Lots of beer-swilling and knights off to the joust come to mind listening to this...actually, all I can think of is the Camelot scene from *Holy Grail*, but you get the point. (CD)-**Myk**

Fleshcrawl "Made Of Flesh" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065).* Fleshcrawl seems to be one of the few bands that is managing to combine true Grindcore elements with those of Gothenburg style Death Metal. Their guitar riffs are very melodic for a Grindcore band, but with the twin vocal stylings of bands like Phobia and Carcass. *Made of Flesh* has 10 tracks that blend from one to the next, and all are devastating. The song structures at times smack of classic Metal set ups with intros and build ups that then launch into blistering Grind-influenced verses, then come to a crushing halt at the end, all the while boasting growls, guitar solos, and tons of blast beats. When talking about bands like Monstrosity, Divine Empire, Suffocation, and Cannibal Corpse, one must insist on entering Fleshcrawl into the conversation as they are easy as powerful as any of those bands, and in many cases far more creative. (CD)-**Myk**

Fleshgrind "Murder Without End" *(Olympic, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Fleshgrind have really pushed their own limits with this album. They are now bordering on Mortician heavy with *Murder Without End*. While musically this is similar to their effort on the last album (with tons of guitar progressions and blast beats), the vocals are approaching Will's in the sheer grunt department. The vox are also very high In the mix, so at times they entirely drown out the guitars which is a crime. This is getting to be the most extreme of the extreme, which starts to stretch out of my realm of interest. These guys are super-talented, but at points they are verging on that mud sound that people let pass as heavy. This will appeal to the select few who believe that there is no "too heavy".... not something I subscribe to, but if you're looking for the ultra extreme, here it is. (CD)-**Myk**

Flux of Pink Indians "The Fucking Cunts Treat Us Like Pricks"/"Taking a Liberty" (*One Little Indian, 67 East 11th St. #517, New York, NY 10003*). You'd better have an hour to kill when you listen to this CD because there are no track stops. It's basically an hour straight through of tape collage and audio experiments. Imagine if Negativland were an English Anarchist Punk band, or, to put it in colloquial terms, this is the *Yes Sir, I Will* of the Flux of Pink Indians catalog. Do I like it? I'm not really sure, but I'm always happy when somebody

has the balls to push beyond the confines of Punk to make a unique, original statement. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Flux of Pink Indians "Strive to Survive Causing Least Suffering Possible"/"Neu Smell" (*One Little Indian, 67 East 11th St. #517, New York, NY 10003*). Ever since I first heard "Tube Disaster" on the Crass records *A Sides* comp, I've been hungry for more Flux of Pink Indians. There was the *Not So Brave* collection of demos, but that disappointed the hell out of me for reasons I no longer remember (maybe I just never gave it a chance). Not to worry, Flux's first LP and that Crass Records EP are collected here on one CD which is far from disappointing. Flux's take on Anarchist Punk was a primeval tribal assault awash in screeching feedback and noise. Like the other Anarcho bands of the era, Flux of Pink Indians were wholly original, passionate and powerful. Most Crust Punk bands these days sound like poorly executed Slayer—they should take more cues from the originators. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

From First to Last "Dear Diary, My Teen Angst Has A Bodycount" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026).* Judging from the album title, most of you already know what category of music this band conveniently falls in. What you have is five haircuts taking themselves way too seriously, refusing to deviate from the formula of pretty—but boring—guitar intro, followed by whiny, self-important, over-dramatized singing, then off-key, nonsensical screaming, and repeat. The only thing that saves From First to Last is that they are slightly better than contemporaries such as Spitalfield and Silverstein, but only slightly. I just don't understand the appeal of this genre any longer, especially the bottom of the barrel acts that have taken it upon themselves to ride the coattails of bands such as Thursday and Taking Back Sunday. (CD)-**McClernon**

Full Speed Ahead "Born to Lose" *(Manic Ride, POB 12593, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* My only exposure to Full Speed Ahead was their split with Kill Your Idols from some years back. This is a shame, because as good as that 7" was, this posthumous release more accurately depicts the skill with which FSA delivered ripping and melodic Hardcore Punk anthems. Dogmatic songs spanning skating, oppression, stress and societal strife ring true with clarity and conviction. A straight ahead, no-frills drive is present throughout, as is a penchant for hooks amid the fast paced fray. Anyone who loves Hardcore not tainted by the trappings of Metal or what is currently passing as "Rock" should take heed.(CD)-**Ramek**

Funeral For A Friend "Casually Dressed and Deep In Conversation" *(Atlantic ...DIY, man!).* Already big in the UK, this band is a high-profile import. My current preferences don't cater much to the Emo-Pop-Punk or light-Metal-with-screaming categories, but I'm sure that this will find an audience with K-Rock listeners. No disrespect meant, as this is a hard-working collective that can play its instruments, but people outgrow music like this at a certain age…Or at least should. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

GBH "Cruel and Unusual" *(Idol, POB 720043, Dallas, TX 75372).* This is a 10 song EP featuring previously unreleased and live tracks from GBH, the gods of the back patch. The studio tracks were recorded in 1987, '89, and '02; the live tracks were taken from the band's 2002 tour. The studio tracks, "No," "Last of the Teenage Idols," and "3-Piece Suit" are the gems here. The live tracks are raw as shit, but as there are only four of them, it leaves you wanting much more. This cool, I just wish it were longer. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

The Gerunds "Featuring Jeremy Dean" *(Cischord, 2547 Meredith St., Philadelphia, PA 19130).* Like this world needs another "The" band... but **this** one is fronted by former Dag Nasty vocalist Peter Cortner. Unfortunately there are only five songs here, three of which include the word goodbye in the title. Based in Philadelphia, The Gerunds are a somewhat modern version of a dark '80's New Wave band. The opening track, "Prick Out Your Ears," is a real standout and phenomenally upbeat song. This is only a demo, the full-length is due out any day. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

The Ghost "This Pen Is A Weapon" *(Some, 345 7th Ave. 24th Fl, New York, NY 10001).* Now I'm sure I'm not the first one to notice it, but glancing at the artwork quickly, I swear the album was called *This Penis A Weapon*. So, after I got a good chuckle at that (which continues as I write this), I moved on to the album itself, which pains me to say, is simply not very good at all. Let me preface that remark with saying that *This Is A Hospital*, the band's previous full-length, was and still is one of my favorite records to come out in the last 10 years, as it's one of the premier Post-Punk albums in a time when so much of the genre has become watered-down and generic. I have been eagerly awaiting this album's release, but *This Pen Is A Weapon* simply doesn't cut it, especially when you take into account the numerous delays of its release, in addition to the fact that all the band could muster since their previous album is nine songs total—one of which was previously released, and the closing track, "We Shall Persist," is an instrumental. I applaud the band for trying new things and making a concerted effort to not release the same album over and over again, but that effort comes off as forced more often than not here. In total, I'd say that only two tracks here, "Mad Max Was An Amateur" and "Banished and Loving It," would be good enough to make the cut for *This Is a Hospital* and they still wouldn't be considered the best tracks from that album. Even the lyrics here, which were such an integral part of what made The Ghost great, are below the band's usually high standards. Maybe I just don't "get" what they've accomplished here yet, but so far *This Pen Is A Weapon* has turned out to be the biggest disappointment of the year, at least from a musical standpoint. (CD)-**McClernon**

Gluecifer "Automatic Thrill" *(SPV USA, 48 Broad St. #287, Red Bank, NY 07701).* This is the second album the band has released on SPV following three on the Sub Pop label. It basically comes to this after all these years: fuck the Strokes, Jet, White Stripes, and any of those other fashionable cocksuckers—they play music to make money and they stole all their ideas and sounds from people who probably didn't make in a career what those fucking yahoos make in a year. Gluecifer is the heart of the music. They may not be selling millions of records, but the records they are selling are true, heartfelt, classic kick ass Rock n' Roll. On this album Gluecifer present themselves with a little bit less of a punk edge than on previous records, but they still go balls out on tracks like "Automatic Thrill" and "Car Full of Stash." Fans of Turbonegro, Murder City Devils, and Electric Frankenstein (besides the fact you probably are well aware of these guys) will be easily attracted to this. Fans of those other previously mentioned wimps, will be destroyed by the honesty of this record, and embarrassed by the obvious mistakes you've made in your choices of music. Here is your chance to redeem yourself with a Rock band that is real and still dangerous. (CD)-**Myk**

The Good Fight "Breathing Room" *(Goodfellow, 27 Wilson St., Hamilton, ON, L8R 1C5 Canada).* Proficient old school Hardcore structure and thrashier inclinations clash with guttural Metalcore drivel, with tragic results. A driving series of chord progressions and mammoth builds are thus spoiled by the generic Metalcore vocal yowls that surface throughout this effort. Tough guy belching (think mid '90s NYC) over what is otherwise a more than tolerable backbone seems a crying shame, and I wish that the vocal work was more in sync with the musical backdrop, so that this disparity would not be quite so discernable. Still, for those who don't mind the surly beatdown howl quite as much as I do, this may be worth a listen. (CD)-**Ramek**

The Gris Gris *(Birdman, POB 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050).* Swirling multi-colored hallucinations abound, Alice is heavily tripping on 'shrooms in a three-dimensional Wonderland, and The Gris Gris provide the ultimate Psychedelic soundtrack to prepare the mind for a vivid array of sparkle-spangled kaleidoscope dreams. Is it 1968 again, or have my ears unknowingly ventured into a surreal, hypnotic aural landscape of an alternate tomorrow? Perhaps both, because judging by the intricately mesmerizing sound collages of this self-titled debut, I've come to the rather abrupt conclusion that 1968 has somehow become the future, and The Gris Gris are its blissed-out, LSD-fueled pipers at the gates of dawn. The otherworldly echo-laden vocals, haunting wailing feedback, floating interplanetary acoustics, and sudden madcap flourishes of electrical wizardry have effectively managed to channel the luminous spirit of Syd Barrett, The Velvet Underground, The 13th Floor Elevators, The Seeds, and Can all bundled up as one sonically enlightening entity. Oh, the rapturous spasms of joy being transported through my soul at this very moment thanks to The Gris Gris and the most vibrantly stunning auditory trip of 1968 or 2004 or any other godforsaken era of mankind's tumultuous existence! (CD)-**Moser**

Guadalupe "Contract the Stank" *(Burn it Down/ Rebuild, 153 East 17th St., Huntington Station, NY 11746).* Northport`s own Guadalupe has much in common with the manic Hardcore Punk of Minor Threat, Faith and early Black Flag, but nothing in common with the countless number of heartbroken crooner bands that have somehow slithered their way into the scene under the guise of playing "Hardcore." Until recently, the idea of conveying important messages and the hope of a better tomorrow is what Hardcore was about. Armed with not only a textbook DIY aesthetic in its packaging *Contract the Stank* makes no excuses for its uncompromising lyrics, once again making sure that cops, scenesters, racists, sexists, and the American government again fear a prominent self-educated subculture called Hardcore. This debut of simplistic yet honest Hardcore brilliance is rare today, as American youth's discontent has been recycled, repackaged and sold back to them in some form or another. *Contract the Stank* is successful in showing that Hardcore can be nostalgic, fun and yes, even have substance. (CD)-**Andriani**

Hammerfall "One Crimson Night" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* The difference between the US and the rest of the world when pertaining to Metal is no more apparent than on this live collection. This is a two CD live album—22 tracks— recorded at one show on Hammerfall's last tour, when they headlined their hometown Sweden. The album they were supporting was number one on the charts, but when they played the US, they were an opening band. Okay, they opened for Dio, I can take that, but they also had to play before King's X, who is fucking insufferable. Hammerfall played for 20 minutes in New York, and in Europe they play 22 tracks. The tone of this line album is very powerful and the performance is exactly what you expect of Hammerfall. This is classic style Metal played for the love of it, not the money. The recording includes such tracks as "Heeding the Call," "Glory to the Brave," "The Way of the Warrior," "The Sign of the Crimson Thunder," and of course "Hammerfall" amongst its selections. This is one of the few Power Metal bands I actually like, and they do not disappoint here. (CD)-**Myk**

Hayden "Elk Lake Serenade" *(Hardwood, www.hardwoodrecords.com). Elk Lake Serenade,* the latest full-length from the acoustic guitar swinging Canuck, Hayden, is a fully-realized collection of songs without the quasi lo-fi approach found on previous recordings. On tracks like "Home By Saturday" and "Woody," Hayden Desser allows his majestic voice and somber acoustic guitar hues to assume center stage while accompanying elements linger about without ever overpowering their specific needs. Hayden writes sad yet beautiful short stories for the new age romantic that would be akin to the sounds of Red House Painters and *Harvest Moon* era Neil Young. One of the finer releases of 2004. (CD)-**Andriani**

Heaven Shall Burn "Antigone" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* This is my pick of the year. Last year I said As I Lay Dying was going to be the band that kicked everyone's ass, and they did just that. This year, the US is going to be annihilated by the German juggernaut that is Heaven Shall Burn. This is the band's fifth release but their first domestically and it is a fucking monster. This takes Straight Edge farther into the Metal world than it has ever been. These guys make Earth Crisis sound like a Posi-Core band; they also make them sound like kindergartners on a musical level. The blast beats that emanate from this record are beyond description. The vocals are pure venom, and the guitars are European vengeance. This is the best band to ever come out of the Lifeforce Records camp, and they are quickly going to be one of the best bands in the current Century Media stable. You heard it here first, Screamo is no longer a concern—these guys are **truly** dangerous. (CD)-**Myk**

The Hentchmen "Form Follows Function" (*Times Beach, 118 East Seventh St., Royal Oak, MI 48067*). Wow. The Hentchmen have taken the '60's Garage thing and Punked it up10 notches. Their music is loud, hard and aggressive, leaving you breathless at the end of each song. They'd go extraordinarily well on a bill with the Repercussions. I dig it, man. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

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Herod "For Whom the Gods Would Destroy" *(Lifeforce, POB 938, 09009 Chemnitz, Germany).* Although these guys are from the Buffalo area, they play music that is almost pigeonholing Herod as Bay Area Thrash. The vocalist reminds me incredibly of James Hetfield during certain parts (this guy has a much better range) and the guitarists play some Testament style stuff. The drumming is so straight forward, it is actually refreshing. This is like a Metal Blade release circa 1984 with a little more melody. (CD)-**Myk**

Hint Hint "Young Days" *(Suicide Squeeze, POB 80511, Seattle, WA 98108).* At first I was really into this band, as they sounded a lot like a band coming out of the same period of PIL or Wire, but unfortunately after the fourth or fifth track, things just seem to drag on. However, the first track, "Natural Collegiate," is a smokin' tune that will sound great at any number of New Wave dance parties. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Hunches "Hobo Sunrise" *(In the Red, POB 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050).* The Hunches sound like a barrel full of gasoline after a lit match is carelessly tossed into it: fantastically explosive! *Hobo Sunrise* is the Portland quartet's second full-length effort, and it's an extravagantly crazed rush of screaming-mad Garage Rock noise and sinister, violently trashed ballads. A feedback-laden squall of broiling guitars is met head-on by a crashing full-force torrent of percussion, a thundering mountain-crumbling bass, and the most whiskey-ravaged, psycho-demented vocals that mine ears have ever gloriously heard. If Salvador Dali had been a sound engineer, he would have put The Velvet Underground, The Stooges, and The Jesus and Mary Chain in a studio together, renamed them The Hunches, and the resulting beastly outburst would be these 14 roof-rattling ditties. Crank it loud, take cover, and beware the clamor. (CD)-**Moser**

The Hunns "Long Legs Die Hunns" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).* Like a tumbling wave of amplified rubble, the Hunns raucously kick things off with a gnashing, incendiary rendition of "Time Has Come Today," on which former Nashville Pussy bassist Corey Parks (now a permanent member of the Hunns crew) struts her powerfully magnetic vocal prowess along with the irrepressibly venomous Duane Peters. Corey and Duane continue to share vocal duties throughout a fair amount of the rest of this barbaric and bouncy release, and it makes for one hell of an electric, kick-ass combination. The instrumental backing is a virile, overpowering assault of sterling noise combativeness that aggressively lashes out at the listener and burns its way deep into the ears. I'm especially knocked silly by the abrasive Punk mini-opera, "Burn In Hell," the spit-strewn cover of the Sex Pistols' "Did You No Wrong" (my most favorite Pistols song of all time!), and the savage, bile-infused gruffness of "The Wrench," "Ameri-Nightmare," and "Cancore Sore." It's a new and improved Hunns with all of the unruly attitude and belligerent bombast that you've come to expect still firmly intact and as lawless as ever. Duke it out and dance in the pit, baby! (CD)-**Moser**

The Hunns "Long Legs" (*Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510*). My only complaint is that there already was a phenomenal '70s Texas Punk band called the Huns. Okay, now that I've gotten that off my chest, I'll salivate over Corey Parks' chest...er, excuse me. The Hunns are a collaboration between Ms. Parks (Nashville Pussy) and Duane Peters (US Bombs). Together, they produce some damn fine New York influenced, CBGBs-style Punk Rock. Good music for drinking and fucking. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Insomnium "Since The Day It All Came Down" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462).* The second full length from this band comes off even better than an impressive debut. Essentially Insomnium play classic Metal similar to Iron Maiden or Judas Priest, but have a death metal vocalist over it. It isn't power metal, it's pretty much straight forward metal, with maybe a little more distortion and a little faster, but much closer to a Thrash album than Death Metal for sure. These songs are punishing though. This album hits you like "Painkiller" did the first time you heard it after "Ram It Down" so much more metal and in your face. This is like Children of Bodom minus a lot of the keyboards. These guys have got it right, Heavy Metal was already set, thee was nothing wrong with the music, it was the vocals that might have needed some change so that is what they did here. I highly recommend this band as they are someone you would pass over. Well don't, especially if you like bands like Children of Bodom, In Flames, Primal Fear and Dark Tranquility. (CD)-**Myk**

Inspector 71 *(114 Ave. A, New York, NY 10009).* I've been hearing rumors of a new, Hard Rock scene burgeoning in lower Manhattan. This three-track EP by Inspector 71 (they took their name from Dirty Harry's badge number) could be a sure sign of the resurgence. Track one, "Go Away," pounds out hard driving power chords with Kate's lead vocals belting the chorus. Track two, "AJ Lied," kept my head bangin' with a bouncing bassline and track three, "Broken," has some lead guitar work reminiscent of '90's Seattle. If there is really a Hard Rock movement returning locally, I'd like to hear more of it. (CD)-**Thomson**

Jed Whitey "Mongoloid Cage Match" *(Manic Ride, POB 12593, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* A litany of self righteous snarls and layered AC/DC-driven riff stew is the dominant formula in Jed Whitey's repertoire. Snotty, inane rollicking that pulls no punches lyrically or musically, coupled with a remarkably aggressive undercurrent propels this record along at a breakneck pace. The Riff Rock approach is hereby given a Hardcore Punk infusion, and the results are enjoyable, though far from novel. While entrenched in a never ending sea of Rock and Roll clichés, Jed Whitey make sure to shred, and so their contrived schtick is largely forgiven. (CD)-**Ramek**

The Jet Boys "Jet Patrol!!" *(http://www2.ttcn.ne.jp/~jetboys).* Hot damn!! **Real** Punk Rock!! And it's from Japan!! The Jet Boys combine elements of the Candy Snatchers, the Turbo ACs and Turbonegro!! They warp those elements into a spitfire fueled on piss and vinegar!! The Jet Boys fucking rule!! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Jet Boys "I Shit My Pants EP" (*Black Lung, POB 7101, Norfolk, VA 23509*). Um... Is it really necessary to describe the genius of this band? Just one look at the song titles ("I Shit My Pants," "Gonna Bite You," "Burnout") is enough to make you wanna buy this, and it's worth every penny. The Jet Boys are now one of my favorite bands. (7")-**chuck.foster**

Jimmy Martin "Don't Cry to Me: Songs From the Film 'King of Bluegrass'" (*Thrill Jockey, POB 08038, Chicago, IL 60608*). Yee-haw!!! Grab yer beer in one hand, yer woman in the other, and let's have ourselves one helluvan honest-to-Betsy Hoedown. Brothers and sisters, Jimmy Martin sings his songs with as much passion and fury as Hank Williams, Sr., and has done so for over fifty years. This here's a CD full o' ass-kickin', boot-stompin', rip-roarin' Country Bluegrass music and it's a soundtrack to a movie didn'cha know. So buy some beer, pick up the CD, and watch the movie with yer girl, 'cause kid, life ain't gettin' any better. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

John Wilkes Booze "Five Pillars of Soul" *(Kill Rock Stars, POB 2161, Bloomington, IN 47402). Five Pillars of Soul* is an annoying, gravely substandard collection of goofy, experimental Alt-Rock gibberish. If Saddam Hussein were exposed to a mere minute of this bilious and offbeat racket, I'm sure he'd gladly reveal all of his deep, dark military secrets and the exact location of his alleged stockpile of weapons of mass destruction (yeh, as if they even exist!). Blundering and atrocious in every sense of the word! (CD)-**Moser**

Joshua Howard "Sub-Terrestrial Symphony" (*Shredsick, 460 Turnpike Rd, Cayuga, NY 13034*). If you're a fan of Danny Elfman—especially his dark, sinister soundtracks—you'll love this CD. Joshua Howard seamlessly merges Classical music, Heavy Metal and Industrial music into compositions at once beautiful and foreboding. The title track alone is a 40-minute opus of technical ability and electronic wizardry, as well as running a spectral gamut of emotions. Hats off, Mr Howard! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Keoki Swindle "The Great Sound Clash" *(Hypnotic, PMB 251, 13428 Maxella Ave., Marina Del Rey, CA 90292).* Two CDs with 37 tracks: a complete waste of plastic. This DJ remixes a bunch of songs from a slew of genres, coining himself a genius. There is no consistency here, which is what the DJ and label are priding the work on. But it's just not as appealing as they're making it out to be; it's more than a clash, it's a disaster! There are songs by artists such as Skinny Puppy, a Flock of Seagulls, and a bunch of Electro bands that were on the Electro Cured CD. You can't even imagine how terrible it is. (CD)-**Cain**

Kill Your Idols "The Skinnier Years" *(State of Grace, POB 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707).* This is one of those gem of a releases that we old fogies love. It is a collection of old, rare, and hard to get recordings. It features the band's first studio recording from 1995, their live demo recorded at CBGB in August of '96 and some studio tracks from March of 1997. On this recording you can hear why the band early on got a reputation for sounding like Negative Approach, that includes them doing NA's "Lead Song" on two different occasions. Trust me, sounding like Negative Approach isn't a bad thing; actually, it was one of the things that attracted me to KYI in the first place. You'll also find Minor Threat, Krakdown and SOA covers on this release, and be a witness to how quickly the band progressed from newbies to the Hardcore stalwarts they are today. There is also an excellent history of the band written by Gary in the liner notes. Man, this brings back great memories! (CD)-**Myk**

Kill Your Idols "For Our Friends" *(Underestimated, POB 13274, Chicago, IL 60613).* Kill Your Idols is one of the most vital bands on Long Island. They play often, they play well, and they release a lot of great records. This is an eight song EP that features a couple of covers, including "Dead Cities" by the Exploited and a guest appearance by Tommy Corrigan, formerly of Silent Majority. This is also one of the most Punk Rock sounding releases KYI has done in some time. The recording is a little dirtier than the last couple, Andy's vocals sound really venomous on this recording, and the guitar sound is really sharp. There is also a picture disc of this release for all you vinyl freaks, with the KYI skull looking like it was spray painted on this clear slab. (CD)-**Myk**

Killing the Dream *(Rival, POB 5242, Concord, CA 94524).* Scream-along Hardcore resurrects the controlled fury of late '90s Boston with favorable results. Layered melodic chops serve the otherwise structured build/breakdown format well, as does a consistently fast-paced scheme. To be sure, this record sounds a bit hackneyed at times, but sturdy musicianship and able harmonic tendencies render good results, regardless. (CD)-**Ramek**

Killswitch Engage "The End of Heartache" *(Roadrunner, 902 Broadway, 8th Fl, New York, NY 10010).* Killswitch Engage's second full-length for Roadrunner has the band on a crash course with stardom. Stepping away from all the difficulties of the last album including losing their vocalist, Killswitch has evolved into a pure Metal powerhouse. Howard Jones' vocals on this album far surpass his work with Blood Has Been Shed, and this lineup has gelled to make Killswitch Engage one of the foremost bands in the new wave of American Metal. Killswitch have risen up from the Metalcore scene playing with bands like Isis and Burnt By the Sun. They have forgone the Hardcore elements of their early existence, and now play straight Metal that ranges from Death Metal to having an almost Emo feel at times. Fans of bands like Poison the Well and From Autumn to Ashes are an easy fit here, but Killswitch even has the ability to reach out towards fans of Linkin Park and even Pantera, the album is that heavy and that diverse. (CD)-**Myk**

Kitchens and Bathrooms "Vehicles Beyond" *(Forge Again, POB 146837, Chicago, IL 60614)* and "Utter A Sound" *(Sonic Unyon, POB 57347, Jackson Station, Hamilton, Ontario L8P-4X2).* I'm reviewing both albums here because in the past I never got to

Utter A Sound, and I try to avoid that if possible. First and foremost, I hated this band from minute one for the **STUPIDEST FUCKING NAME OF ALL TIME!** It had to be some crappy art band, who else would come up with something as dumb as "Kitchens and Bathrooms"? What you have here is **exactly** the kind of band that Ron Noiz would put on in the van during a Pacifier trip—we would all yell at him to take it off. This is post-Drive Like Jehu type noise, almost like the Emo version. It's more melodic, but there is far less interesting stuff going on. There are tons of off-time progressions and lots of guitar and drum-only parts. After a while parts start to drone, and at some moments the vocals kick in out of no where, both screamed and sung. These guys really remind me of when June of '44 got uninteresting. Imagine Last Crime with all the explosive parts removed and all the ambition dragged out of it—this is a record where absolutely nothing happens....and I sat through **both** of them. (CD)-**Myk**

The Kite Eating Tree "Methods; Fail, Repeat..." *(Suburban Home, POB 40757, Denver, CO 80204)*. The Kite Eating Tree have a pretty solid Rock sound, kind of similar to No Knife. The busy drummer really adds a lot of flavor to these midtempo tunes. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

KUKL "Holidays In Europe (The Naughty Nought)" (*One Little Indian, 67 East 11th St. #517, New York, NY 10003*). Here is a reissue of KUKL's second LP as originally released by Crass Records in the mid '80s. More Avant-Garde weirdness Bjork-style. Annoy your friends! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

KUKL "The Eye" (*One Little Indian, 67 East 11th St. #517, New York, NY 10003*). For those not in the know, KUKL was an Icelandic Anarchist Art Punk band, mostly noted for introducing Bjork to the rest of the world. Fans of Bjork's earlier, more Avant-Garde work will surely love this. Crust punks beware: this CD is most definitely NOT formulaic Hardcore. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

La Mi Vida Violenta "We Are Ghosts" *(http://www.angelfire.com/ma3/myviolentlife.html)*. I almost feel as if I can't adequately formulate words to describes the utter brilliance of La Mi Vida Violenta and this two song EP. La Mi Vida Violenta plays a rhythmically complex brand of avant garde Funk laced with bursts of guitar squall, soulful vocals and a whole cannon of polyrhythmic percussion. File this Massachusetts-based band with Afro-groove oriented indie groups such as !!! and Liquid Liquid mixed with the skronk Jazz renderings of James Chance and The Contortions. La Mi Vida Violenta creates music that intrigues, entertains, and more importantly, moves the body like no one's business. (CD)-**Andriani**

Lars Frederiksen and the Bastards "Viking" *(Hellcat, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Just when you thought Lars Frederiksen was the type of tattooed punk that you could let your child accept candy from, he comes out with this album. The insert is packed with photos of Lars and half naked females. There is also a song featuring Tim Armstrong about all the girls that they fucked. This seems very out of character until a good friend pointed out, "Wait a minute, they're called `The Bastards,' not `the friends.'" If you're able to get past the braggadocios element of this album, then you have a good Punk Rock album. The last song is quite possibly the best song Lars has ever written, and even features Mat Freeman on the mandolin. Are you aware this man not only has a bat tattooed on his chin, he also has the word "skunx" tattooed on his forehead? I just thought you should know. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Le Scrawl "Eager to Please" (*Life Is Abuse, POB 20524, Oakland, CA 94620*). Alright, now I've heard everything. Le Scrawl shifts from Grindcore to Ska, Jazz and German Folk music in the blink of an eye. The results are quite interesting (read: amusing). This is the perfect CD to put on when you want to confuse the hell out of your friends. They'll **really** think you're weird. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Leatherface "Dog Disco" *(BYO, POB 6777609, Los Angeles, CA 90067)*. This band has been legendary since the release of *Mush*. Because of that, their releases are always highly anticipated and sometimes overly scrutinized. In this case, it's deserved. The record is okay; it's the typical Leatherface sound, with lots of melodies and the signature gruff voice, but there is nothing to really right home about. The album melts into the background and is over before you even realize it. Not to mention that this CD has the worst cover artwork ever. At times this album actually reminds me of later Mighty Bosstones, when Dickie tried to sing and it just sounded like a hoarse guy all the time. While I'll keep this and probably pop it in every once in a while, it is very non descript. (CD)-**Myk**

Left Alone "Lonely Starts and Broken Hearts" (*Smelvis, POB 1779, Wilmington, CA 90744*). Left Alone play yer typical generic, run-of-the-mill Warped Tour-style Punk Rock. Yawn. I've heard it all before and I didn't even like it then, so I ain't gonna like it now, especially when they foray into Ska Punk. Yuck. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Leftover Crack "Fuck World Trade" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)*. So, you just saw *Fahrenheit 9/11*, bought a "Not My President" t-shirt, and all you lack is a soundtrack to your feelings of disgust towards your president, US foreign policy, and world trade? Well my friends, look no further, Leftover Crack has a new album, and it's good. Leftover Crack mix Reggae, Ska, Grindcore, Street Punk and Metal into their sound, and they do it well. "Gang Control" is a guaranteed hit for the mohawks, with a chorus that screams "Fuck the Police," how could you go wrong? If you still live with your parents you might want to hide this album, as it's already been banned due to the artwork which shows the World Trade Center on 9/11/01. The artwork might seem a little inappropriate to some, and others might even feel it's a way to actually sell records, even if Leftover Crack **is** against capitalism. Either way, I wouldn't go through customs with this album in my hands. (CD)-Cyst Vicious

Letter Kills "The Bridge" *(Island, 825 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10019)*. I don't know much about this band. This is their major label debut after a self produced EP they apparently sold on tour. What I **do** know is that this is a pretty decent Rock n' Roll record. Letter Kills steps away from the annoyingly whiney and bitchy pop that they are passing as Punk these days. They have some melodies from that style, but there is much more of an edge to their guitar sound and a lot more spine in the vocals. These guys aren't the Murder City Devils, but they are far more entertaining than the Strokes. There is a lot of Kiss on this recording and maybe even a bit of the New York Dolls and definitely some '80's New Wave in the song writing process. I think these guys are from the same mold that the AKAs were going for, except these guys are a lot more polished. Really good for a debut effort, especially for something on a major. (CD)-**Myk**

Leval Blessing *(Barbarian, 254 W. Gillman, Madison, WI 53703)*. The vocals on this album just suck. I'm not sure if it is two vocalists, or some weird harmonizing effect, but they blow the big one. The music is super technical, sort of sounding like a Death Metal band playing Dillinger Escape Plan riffs. The album is chaotic, with riffs that don't match up with the vocals and off-time drumbeats from left field. This is a prime example of a band being overly ambitious, and not knowing when to say simple is better. It's just to much for any kind of song structure, and most of the songs have the same sort of framework. (CD)-**Myk**

The Locomotions *(Dead Beat, POB 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078)*, The Scandinavians are to Rock n' Roll what cheese is to crackers and peanut butter is to jelly, err, yeah. The Locomotions play an interesting mix of late '60's-early '70's R&B-infused Punk Rock n' Roll, raw to the bone that brings to mind bands such as The Kids, Real Kids, and even the New York Dolls at times. The Locomotions have no intention of re-inventing the wheel, but that doesn't matter at all, 'cause their sound pays homage to a number of my favorite acts, and they do it admirably. These Swedes certainly aren't the best Rock band to come out of their respective country, but they certainly rock harder than many of the bands that represent the States. Oh yeah, major points for two choice covers, "Under My Thumb" and "Locomotion." "Everybody's doing a brand new dance now...." (CD)-**McClernon**

Lords "The House that Lords Built" *(Initial, POB 17131, Louisville, KY 40217)*. A disc that borders on unique and odd, Lords have at least broken the long-established mold of what a CD release can be. The tracks flow into one another, and if you're not paying close attention or watching the tracks go by, you might think its one long, oddly-structured song. The music has a loose and frenzied feel to it, and I'd love to check these guys out at a bar where I can drink a serious amount of beer. A feedback-laden turbocharged Garage assault, Lords' disc is essentially seven songs (the last four tracks are one song split up on four tracks, with the last track being the whole EP played backwards for some reason). Need an algebraic equation to summarize this disc yet? No? Maybe now you will—the above description repeats itself entirely, making for a total of how many songs and how many tracks? I know the answer, but if you tell me, you win a prize...the CD itself. Be the first to IM me at xcactsjakx and win. I'm the gift that keeps on giving. (CD)-**KevTV**

Macha "Forget Tomorrow" *(Jet Set, 67 Vestry St. 5B, New York, NY 10013)*. These guys fit in with the new wave of new wave retro bands that are popping up all over. I guess if you mixed mellower versions of Radio 4 and Girls Against Boys, you got Macha. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Magna Fi "Burn Out the Stars" *(Aezra, 14040 North Cave Creek Rd. Suite 110, Phoenix, AZ 85022)*. When I read that Magna Fi was on the Ozzfest tour I thought they'd be wretched, but it turns out that they're not half bad. They write very catchy and selfish songs. Half the tracks are your average K-Rock style crap, and no doubt that those will be the successful "hits." The other half are surprisingly good for an Alt-Rock band. They've toured with/opened up for Puddle of Mudd which the best compliment for this genre today. Magna Fi is not to be compared to Puddle of Mudd, though; they're to be compared to Alice in Chains and Nirvana, before the Alt-Rock scene was destroyed and turned to shit. (CD)-**Cain**

Martyr AD "On Earth As It Is In Hell" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. It's been about three years since the release of Martyr AD's debut full-length on Ferret Records. Since then they've had a pretty major lineup switch and signed on at Victory Records. What hasn't changed is the ferocious nature of this band's songs. The recording on this album is superb and fully exposes the sonic attack with punishing double kick blast beats, Death Metal-style guitar riffs and vocals that Karl from Earth Crisis would have trouble matching on his best day. Martyr AD is the band that falls in between Hatebreed and Death Metal from the Hardcore world. The breakdowns are there, but these guys write music like they're from Sweden in the early '90s. (CD)-**Myk**

Matt Sharp *(In Music We Trust, www.mattsharp.net)*. Best known for his time in Weezer and leadership of The Rentals, Matt Sharp went into hiding after the latter's Seven More Minutes didn't earn much more than critical acclaim. However, the Moogs and female vocal harmonies are now gone in favor of a sound that is acoustic—aside from guitar pickups, microphones, keyboards and accompanying atmospheric noise. Catching a few songs (i.e. "All Those Dreams," "Goodbye West Coast") off this disc is great and cleansing, but a full-length listen isn't going to leave you optimistic or ready to leave your house. At the very least, this disc is original and unique. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Mayhem "Chimera" *(Seasons of Mist, POB 29364, Philadelphia, PA 19125)*. The worst thing about this record is that it is too short. The band, which has managed to maintain its line up despite several rumors to the contrary and several problems involving members—including one hitting someone in the head with a pig skull. This is probably

the band's best recording going back to before their reunion for Wolf's Lair Abyss. They have dispersed with all the techno elements and the attempts at clean vocals and mellow breakdowns. This album is a complete return to Black Metal, the Mayhem way. Hellhammer is at full capacity behind the drum kit and Maniac is as putrid sounding as ever on vocals. The album is very bass heavy, which was always the opposite of their signature sound; I like the change, as I happen to be very partial to bass. I think Blasphemer is now down to one band (which wasn't the case in the past) and it really shows in his guitar parts—they are a little more in-depth and technical, but still entirely heavy. The "One True" Mayhem has returned, and this is their testament. (CD)**-Myk**

The Mentally Ill "Gacy's Place: The Undiscovered Corpses" (*Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141*). I first heard the Mentally Ill's "Gacy's Place" on one of the *Killed by Death* comps and immediately fell in love with the erratic sloppy musicianship and the maniacal chanting chorus of "They're fucking your kids!" Hearing what must be the entire recorded history of this band, I can say they certainly chose the right band name. The songs are bashed out with the reckless abandon of insanity. Many of the songs have very similar song structures, which only adds to the "mental patient" concept of the band. This CD will make a worthy addition to your Scumfuck Punk collection. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

Midtown "Forget What You Know" *(Sony, 550 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022).* Midtown is back with a new album, longer hair, and a less-vain, more-poppy sound. The songs are depressing and somehow upbeat at the same time. On Forget What You Know, songs range from quiet to loud in the most amiable way and still maintain their melodic shouts and sing-alongs— the whole essence of their previous albums. Much like other bands, they've matured, started writing more selfless songs, and seem to, in comparison to their earlier work, have ultimately become used to each other as a band. Yeah, they still have their original Jersey Emo Rock style, but they definitely sound a whole lot better. Along with their musical development, and the ever-growing fanbase of the Indie genre, Midtown just might achieve their long-term goal: to be the Guns N' Roses of Emo. (CD)**-Cain**

Mike Watt "The Secondman's Middle Stand" *(Columbia/Sony, 550 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022).* Here is the third album from living legend Mike Watt, formerly of the groundbreaking Minuteman, and arguably the greatest Punk Rock bassist to ever pluck a note. The Secondman's Middle Stand recounts Watt's bout with a month and a half long sickness, which left him bed-ridden, reading and re-reading ancient classics such as Dante's Inferno as well as the four Gospels. Strangely enough, those references come through loud and clear in the music on this record, made up solely of vocals, bass, organ, and drums. Perhaps it's because I just finished reading The Rule of Four—a novel about an ancient book that possesses secrets that only a philosopher who craves knowledge could de-code—that I feel this way, but listening to Watt's latest effort makes me think that there's more here than just what's on the surface. The music and lyrics are telling a story, that much is certainly true, but one gets the feeling that Watt is not telling the whole tale, that only a person of virtue will understand what secrets The Secondman's Middle Stand holds dear. Then again, I could just be reading waaay too much into this, and should perhaps look at The Secondman's Middle Stand for what it most certainly is: a musically great record. Either way you slice it, Mike Watt is THE MAN. (CD)**-McClernon**

Mission of Burma "On Off On" *(Matador,625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012).* Thanks in part to the renewed interest largely stemming from Michael Azerrad`s book *Our Band Could Be Your Life,* an exposé of the American Indie and-Punk scenes of the '80s, Mission of Burma have reformed to release their first record since 1983`s *Vs.* Unlike most uninspired reunions and their subsequent recordings, *On Off On* finds these old hands not missing a step; Not to say that Mission of Burma is stuck in a rhetorical song writing approach, but rather, they have built a perfect bridge from the present to their past efforts. More than 20 years later, these Post Punk pioneers are continuing to improve on their angular, noisy, anthemic Rock formula. *On Off On* also boasts an impressive recording by Bob Weston, which somehow conveys the feeling that *On Off On* was released in the '80s. Long time fans can rejoice, while new fans should prepare to appreciate pioneers that had previously been long forgotten. (CD)**-Andriani**

Monster Magnet "Monolithic Baby!" *(SPV USA, 48 Broad St, #287, Red Bank, NY 07701).* The Doom scene has gotten so big over the last few years that it's really odd to listen to a Monster Magnet album. They really had a hand in bringing this style back to the forefront, but, to some degree, they've also been left behind. Yet they still chug along playing their brand of groove-laden, '70's Rock and Roll. Nothing much has changed for Monster Magnet since their last album—the record even **looks** very similar. The band grooves on the guitar sound and rocks out on the tracks. The vocals are still more spoken than sung and now they are back on an indie instead of a major that doesn't know what to do with them. With bands like Black Label Society getting so much bigger these days, it would seem logical that bands like Monster Magnet would get more exposure. If that's the case, they have a really good album to support. (CD)**-Myk**

Motorhead "Inferno" *(Sanctuary, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036).* This can be short. It's Motorhead. For the last 10 years or so, the band has found a groove. They put out an album about every other year, and they are consistently good from start to finish. *Inferno* easily fits into that mold, with tracks like "Killers" and "In the Black." Is this album *No Remorse* or *Orgasmatron*? Certainly not, but it is easily the rival of *We Are Motorhead*, and it surpasses their work on *Snakebite Love*. This is the dark Rock n' Roll that inspired both Punk and Metal bands from the very beginning. No one has done it longer, and no one has done it better. Motorhead one of the greatest bands ever for playing what they play, and this is yet another example of them doing their thing and just kicking ass with great Rock n' Roll songs. (CD)**-Myk**

My New Life "A Sad State of Affairs" *(Tomato Head, POB 61298, Sunnydale, CA 94088).* My New Life belts out songs as poppy as Blink 182 or the Ataris, but are cool enough to record a Jawbreaker cover, "Bad Scene, Everyone's Fault." Here, any possibility for My New Life to distance themselves from their influences goes right down the toilet—maybe this CD should go with it. (CD)**-Cain**

My Revenge! "Less Plot, More Blood" *(Thorp, POB 6786, Toledo, OH 43612).* Spencer Crispe and company offer their sophomore (but not sophomoric) slab of Hardcore Punk, replete with ripping riff wreckage and bile-addled screams. Bringing it back, alright, but not in the clean-cut, crew-cut youth crew sense, My Revenge! unleash a raw and rather uncompromising concoction of early (think '83-'85) New York Hardcore-style venom. Spewing forth disparate lamentations spanning government infringement upon civil liberties, the commercialization of skateboard culture, and the pitfalls of fear, My Revenge! present a competent sequel to their memorable debut LP in *Less Plot, More Blood*. Though the sound is noticeably thicker and slightly heftier this time around (offering less of a hyper-speed drive than before) this is an enjoyable effort throughout. (CD)**-Ramek**

My So-Called Band "Weapons of Mass Distortion" *(Suicide Watch, POB 9599, Charlotte, NC 28299).* I've never personally met My So-Called Band's vocalist/bassist, Chris Peigler, but he seems to be one of the most dedicated, enthusiastic, and idealistic members of the punk community today, judging by his entertaining articles that often show up on the *Razorcake* website and especially by his group's musical output the past couple of years. I distinctly remember reviewing MS-CB's debut release for *Flipside* in the late 1990s, whereupon I mercilessly lambasted its musical content with an unwavering torrent of caustic and insulting commentary. Chris good-naturedly sent an MS-CB t-shirt to me soon after the review was published, and thus began a long-distance friendship of the sort where written correspondence and email messages are routinely exchanged. During the ensuing rapidly passing years, Chris always eagerly mailed the latest MS-CB CD to me, and I must truthfully confess that the songs have become consistently more energetic, more infectious, and definitely more punk along the way. *Weapons of Mass Distortion* (the wittiest, most laughable title yet!) is an eight-song blast of kinetic rocket-propelled rhythms, scorching Johnny Thunders-style leads, and snotty emotion-tinged vocals. The lyrics are volatile, meaningful tirades against mindless internet junkies, systematic class warfare, political imprisonment, the Orwellian and fascistic Patriot Act, voter complacency, and the Israeli occupation of Palestine. My vote for the most rockin', bone-rattlin' tune in the batch overwhelmingly goes to "The World I Know"; it bleeds the eardrums dry in a mere instant! If My So-Called Band continues to raucously progress at the frenzied rate they're going, they'll soon surpass several of the bands that inspired them to take up the punk cause in the first place. You gotta admire such tenacity and spirit! (CD)**-Moser**

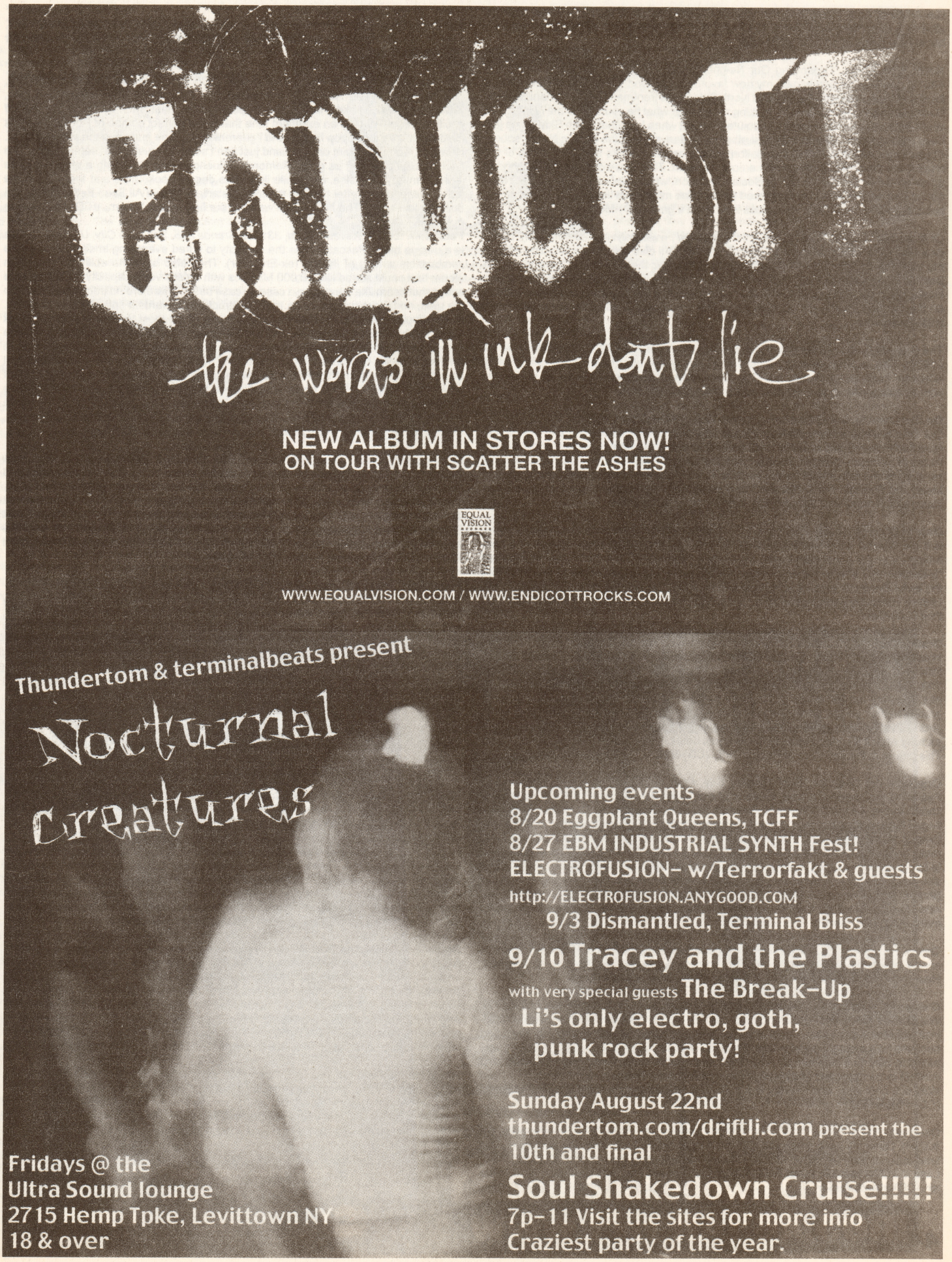
Nattefrost "Blood and Vomit" *(Seasons of Mist, POB 29364, Philadelphia, PA 19125).* This is the solo effort by Nattefrost of Carpathian Forest. It is vile. It is fast. It sounds every bit as blackened as a Carpathian Forest record, and the lyrics might even be a little more offensive. There is one weird track intro that reminds me of "Pizza and Beer" by Carnivore, but I'll leave that as a surprise. There are some bands that still wholeheartedly stick to the "true" Norwegian sound, and this is absolutely one of those albums. Fans of old Mayhem, Darkthrone, Bathory and Burzum will eat this up. (CD)**-Myk**

Neptune "Intimate Lightning" (*Mister, 199 South St. #5, Boston, MA 02130*). Neptune plays a dark, brooding jaggedly angular Post Punk Noise Rock that's disturbingly morose, making the listener extremely uncomfortable. That said, I really like this and I'm really happy to hear more music like this coming from the underground scenes. Ladies and gentleman, the millennium is here. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

Nikola Sarcevic "Lock-Sport-Krock" *(Burning Heart/Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* Nikola Sarcevic is the frontman for one of Sweden's biggest Punk successes, Millencolin. The opener, "Lovetrap," sets the pace for the album—it avoids the singer-songwriter perils because the music speaks just as much as the words do. Instead of using the guitar as a canvas to paint out the words, Sarcevic uses the music as another tool to paint his picture. The song is accented by the use of a harmonica, bringing to mind an almost American Folk template. The title track has a Marley-like acoustic pace and is the predecessor to "Glue Girl," a much more uptempo song that has what all albums should have: a cowbell. Is Punk/Acoustic/Folk a genre? Does it matter? Good is good, and Sarcevic impressively steps away from his work in Millencolin to create music on a completely different punk page. I'm always impressed when an artist can write completely different types of music and make both work; this is no different. Though I have never been a Millencolin fan, there's no denying talent. (CD)**-KevTV**

Nine Pound Hammer "Kentucky Breakdown" (*Acetate, 1221 S. Burnside Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90019*). Let's cut the crap and get to the point: Nine Pound Hammer was originally formed in the late '80s by Scott Luallen and Blaine Cartwright. In the mid '90s, the band broke up and Blaine formed Nashville Pussy (maybe you've heard of them). Well, Nine Pound Hammer is back, kickin' ass in the rodeo as always and ready to lasso that stereo of yours. Fans of Antiseen and Nashville Pussy—of course—will love this. I do. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

No Motiv "Daylight Breaking" *(Vagrant, 2118 Wilshire Blvd, POB361, Santa Monica, CA 90403).* This album peaks and valleys a bit. There are some moments on *Daylight Breaking* where No Motiv really shoots to the top with bands like Alkaline Trio, and then there are a few moments that they fall behind in their own songwriting and bottom out. I got the last Vagrant Records sampler and there is no doubt that these guys were one of the brightest spots on that roster, but they need to stay consistent. If you like bands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like Alkaline, early Ataris and AFI you should eat this up. If they can make their full albums a consistent work similar to tracks like "Independence Day" No Motiv will be a household name in no time. (CD)-**Myk**

North Side Kings "Organizing Our Neighborhood" *(Thorp, POB 6786, Toledo, OH 43612).* Ladies and gentleman, my new favorite band: North Side Kings! Now, does a lot of that have to do with the fact that North Side Kings frontman Danny Marianino made Danzig his bitch with one punch, making me wonder what he could do to me? Umm, hell yeah! But luckily for me, I can be absolutely honest when I say that North Side Kings just keep getting better. Where their first album was derivative of the classic NYHC sound, *Organizing…* takes a NYHC foundation, injects catchier hooks and pulls some of the crunch from the mix, leading to an enjoyable listen. They even do a surprisingly good cover of "Down On the World" by Social Distortion, which rivals the original. With their sound and appearance, I'm convinced these fellas must have lived in New York at one point, but either way, New York's loss is Arizona's gain. (CD)-**McClernon**

Of Montreal "Satanic Panic In the Attic" *(Polyvinyl , www.polyvinylrecords.com).* Long-time fans of Of Montreal know to expect: another lo-fi disc with Kevin handling 95% of the instruments, although on *Satanic Panic In the Attic* there seems to have more of a Beatles influence than ever. Higher-register vocals are as common on this disc as pop hooks, but most impressive to me about the release is the psychedelic art that's found on the CD and insert—it's good to know that some people still care about that stuff! (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The One AM Radio "A Name Writ in Water" *(Level Plane, POB 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906).* This is pretty mellow and not what I expected after hearing the really heavy releases from Level Plane, but The One AM's atmospheric sound is somewhat comparable to Hood, and at times a bit folksy. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

On Our Own "Now and Forever" *(Perfect Victim, POB 52084, Boston, MA 02205).* On Our Own is a Hardcore outfit from Florida, signed to a label in Boston, and this album, *Now and Forever*, was recorded in Brooklyn. So you know what to expect, right? Eleven tracks of politically charged, honest Hardcore songs. They're as hard as Hatebreed but hone up to the integrity of bands such as Comeback Kid, Where Fear and Weapons Meet, and Strength For A Reason. They seem very passionate about their music and ideals which makes for the perfect Hardcore band. (CD)-**Cain**

Only In Dreams "Under This Burning Sky" *(Pop Smear, www.popsmearrecords.com).* Is it the Weezer song title/band name? Is it the pseudo Derek Hess artwork of a half-naked muscular angel man losing his wings on the cover? Is it the poorly constructed "breakdowns"? Maybe the emotional acoustic guitar cut in the middle of the song with the awful dying cat vocals? This band just might be the biggest bunch of posers, ever. I haven't used the word "poser" since junior high, so you know I mean it when I say I hate this! (CD)-**Cain**

Orange Goblin "Thieving From the House of God" *(The Music Cartel, POB 629, Port Washington, NY 11050).* Orange Goblin has never done a bad album. They all differ a little from the previous one, but never has one been bad. This new album is no different. *Thieving…* is more groovy sounding than their last couple of records, but it is **so** kick ass. They are out of the total doldrums of being a Stoner band, and have infused some groove to their songs, and especially their guitar solos. At times they really have some strong Black Sabbath influences (I hate using that reference, but in this case, it is **exactly** what it is) and at other times they just break in straight on '70s influenced Rock. This album is the definition of Rock n' Roll. (CD)-**Myk**

Orquesta del Desierto "Dos" *(Meteor City, POB 40322, Albuquerque, NM 87196).* Featuring members of Kyuss, Queens of the Stone Age, as well as Pete Stahl, best known for his work in DC Hardcore legends Scream, Orquesta del Desierto plays Latin-tinged Rock n' Roll that is so smooth Santana couldn't have done a better job. The odd thing is that though most of the music is played acoustically, the overall performance rocks so damn hard you hardly notice that this isn't exactly what you'd be accustomed to banging your head to. The biggest surprise of all might be Stahl's vocals, which in fact are quite incredible, something I might not have expected from hearing him in his Scream days. This release may not appeal to all fans of Rock n' Roll, but for those of you who like your Rock on the Stoner side of things, you really couldn't ask for anything more. (CD)-**McClernon**

Owen "The EP" (*Polyvinyl, www.polyvinylrecords.com*). This CD is an excruciating five songs of weepy Indie Folk Rock. The horrible lyrics had me howling in laughter. Recommended for extremely vapid hipster chicks. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Owsley "The Hard Way" *(Lakeview, 594 Broadway, Suite 509, New York, NY 10012).* Will Owsley has it both good and bad. He has it good because he's a talented multi-instrumentalist that writes smart, ear-pleasing and cohesive power-pop. He has it bad because he's a critic's darling—and Nashville industry favorite, considering that he was asked to play as a sideman by Amy Grant and Shania Twain—and is too laid-back and modest to be approved of by hipsters and mainstream listeners. Either way, *The Hard Way* is a cool disc, and Owsley is a cult artist deserving to be heard by the masses. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Ozomatli "Street Signs" (*Concord, 100 N Crescent Dr., Suite 275, Beverly Hills, CA 90210*). Ozomatli were getting HUGE in LA right before I left. Ahh, the nostalgia. This time around, they've added Middle Eastern influences to their characteristically Afro-Latin mix. The result is some extremely powerful music that puts revolution back in the air. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Paper Champions "Weekend of Compromise" (*Reason Y, 747 Barnett St. NE No.4, Atlanta, GA 30306*) Emo: you either love it or you hate it. You make the decision for yourself. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Peacocks "It's Time For…" *(Asian Man, POB 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030).* The Peacocks are a Rockabilly influenced Pop Punk band from Switzerland (yes, Switzerland) who make the mistake of putting their best track by far in the leadoff position. "Too Good" is an excellent tune that is the perfect combo of Rockabilly-Punk filled with ultra-catchy pop hooks, and I guarantee you'll be humming the song for days. However, from that point on, the band just can't seem to muster that same magic. The final 12 cuts come off as goofy Ramones-influenced Pop Punk with a stand-up bass more than anything else, and while it still has decent hooks here and there, it left me rather disappointed after hearing the strong start. In "We've All Seen Better Days," the opening line says, "The best songs were on our first record." Hmm…(CD)-**McClernon**

Peccatum "Lost In Reverie" *(End, 331 Rio Grande #58, Salt Lake City, UT 84101).* This is a unique band. Peccatum has the capacity to shred everything in sight through the combustible writing of Ihsahn (ex-Emperor). They also have the ability to record an album that could sound like 10,000 Maniacs with Ihriel's vocal capacity. Yet, they write songs that seem like they go on a case by case basis. There are no tracks that lead into the next, and there are no songs that are structured towards a specific style of music. For example, "Parasite My Heart" starts with one of the most traditional spots of Black Metal you will find on this album, and but then after about a minute it breaks down into a snail-paced piano piece with ethereal vocals that are low in the mix and almost seem an after thought. I **do** have a hard time calling this a "Metal" album anymore though. It has Metal elements, but it is from a way more artistic direction. Goth? Well maybe. Dark soundtrack material? Well on its way. A piece to satisfy those left cold by Emperor's departure from the scene? Don't even fucking bother. This is strictly an avant garde release for adventurous listeners—it's a lot of Electronica and Folk with Metal influences, making for yet another indescribable release from this band. (CD)-**Myk**

Pigmy Love Circus "The Power of Beef" *(Go Kart, POB 20, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012).* As the obnoxiously large sticker on the cover clearly states, this band features drummer Danny Carey of Tool, though this band doesn't resemble Tool at all. This is more like white trash, biker bar Hard Rock of the sort that Antiseen and the rest of the Confederacy of Scum have performed for over 20 years. The only problem is that Pigmy Love Circus is simply not as interesting as those bands. They come off more like a bunch of unconvincing Sunset Strip rockers trying to slum it by playing Southern-fried Rock n' Roll, getting poor results. (CD)-**McClernon**

Pistol Grip "Tear it All Down" *(BYO, POB 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067).* The third full-length from Pistol Grip brings us more L.A.-influenced melodic Street Punk with a heavy Clash slant. *Tear it All Down* doesn't veer very far off-course from their previous material, and I think that's my biggest problem with this release and furthermore, this band. Three albums later and the band has become extremely formulaic, and it's a formula that while not bad, hasn't worked to great success for them either. Pistol Grip really hasn't progressed since *Shots...*, and by "progression" I don't mean littering an album with drum solos and pyrotechnics, and it's all beginning to grow tiresome. There are some above average tracks here, but nothing that makes you do a double-take. If you like your music risk-free or are a fan of the band, then you probably won't take my criticism very seriously and will slap your greenbacks down without hesitating, but don't say I didn't warn ya. (CD)-**McClernon**

Please Mr. Gravedigger "Here's to the Life of the Party" *(Pluto, www.plutorecords.com).* These Rock n' Roll mercenaries could be the heir to the throne vacated by the almighty Murder City Devils. Please Mr. Gravedigger is one of the most exciting new bands to land in my CD player in ages, with a sound that combines the aforementioned band's organ-heavy, guitar-driven Rock music with a more spastic, Hardcore-tinged vocalist, similar to the dude from Sex Positions or a less high-pitched Blood Brothers. All 14 tracks are top notch with a cool horror-vibe to boot, and too many are great to even mention 'em by name. These guys ooze emotion like their very lives depend on it, and don't confine themselves to boundaries or play by the rules, which is the very essence of Punk Rock. I have no idea where these cats came from, and I'm clueless as to why they haven't received more attention, but it's only six months into the new year and I can safely say this will be on my Top 10 of 2004. (CD)-**McClernon**

Prayer For Cleansing "The Rain In Endless Fall" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27449).* This is a re-issue of one of Tribunal's first releases. It has been remastered and remixed and the band features members who went on to be a part of Between the Buried and Me. Prayer For Cleansing was one of the earliest bands to mix Hardcore with Swedish Death Metal, and also Grindcore. The vocals are almost Carcass-like at times, and the guitar parts pull from the earliest of Entombed sounds. You can hear the raw experimentations that lead to today's Victory incarnation of Between… A good addition for their fans, and fans of bands like Darkest Hour and Black Dahlia Murder. (**CD)-Myk**

Rattle Battle "Push Up" *(Perfect Victim, POB 52084, Boston, MA 02205).* This is a two-song sampler from a Hardcore-rooted band located in Boston called Rattle Battle. Inspired by bands such as AC/DC and Nashville Pussy, Rattle Battle is nothing but exciting, and I'm sure they're a hoot to see live. I want more. I want to hear more! I want to see more! Rattle Battle makes you want to scream "I love Rock n' Roll" the way Joan Jett did, but even louder. This amazes me simply because no one else has done this; it's entirely ingenious and hilarious. (CD)-**Cain**

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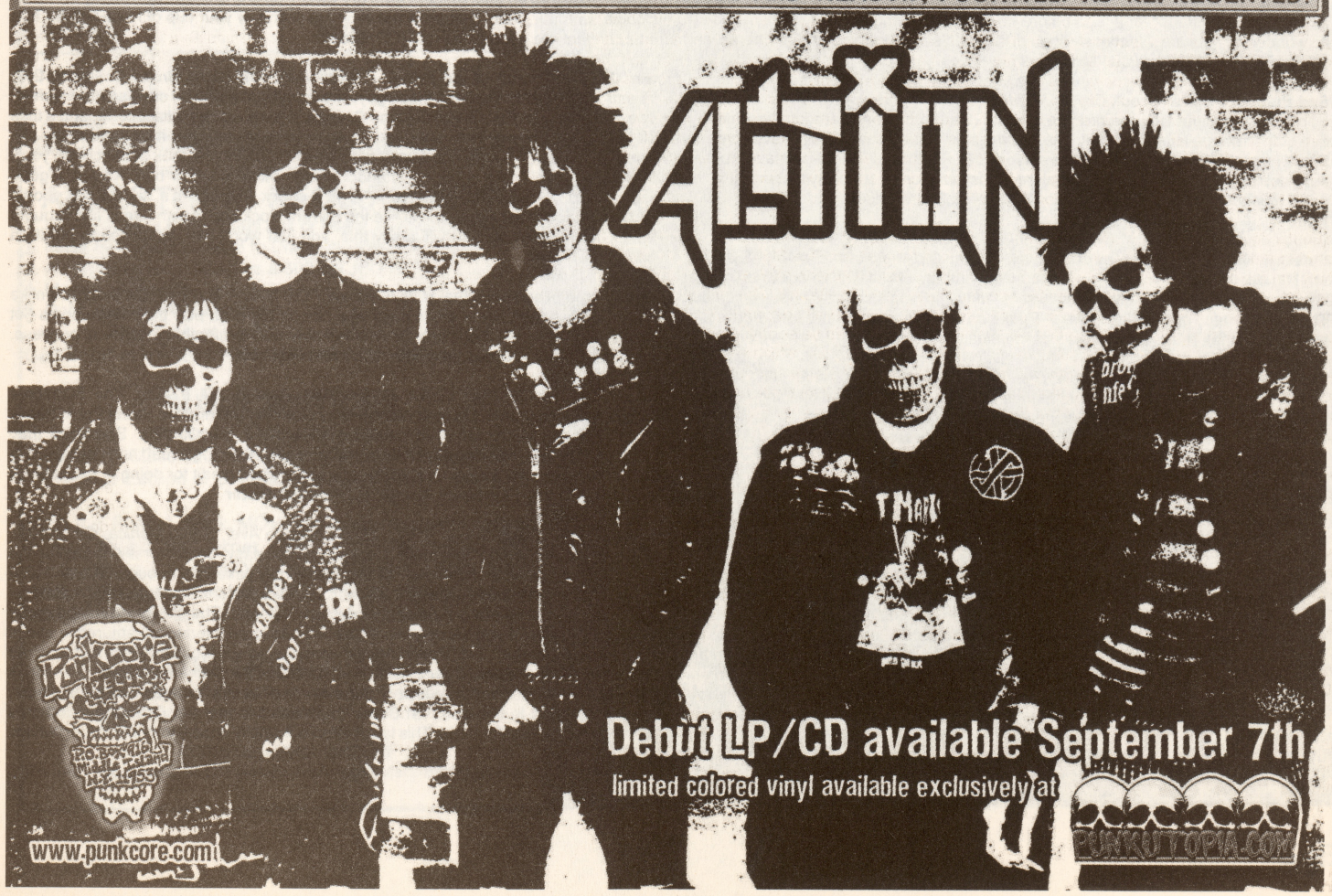


The Ratchets *(Chunksaah, POB 974, New Brunswick, NJ 08903).* This four-song debut EP shows incredible promise. Combining '50's and '60's Rock n' Roll with a Reggae guitar influence, for this New Jersey-based four-piece could be described as the Clash meets later-period Rancid meets Dion and the Belmonts, with a vocalist that sounds like a cross between Strummer, Tim Armstrong, Jeff Ott, and Chris from Lawrence Arms (I know, it gets confusing, but stay with me). The first two tracks, "Naming All the Wolves" and "77A Broadway" are the real gems, but the final two songs are no slouches either. As far as Rock n' Roll bands go, the Ratchets are not raging and alcohol-fueled like so many of my favorites, but they have that same intensity and emotion, just conveyed in a different, albeit more downcast way. (CD)-**McClernon**

Red Planet "We Know How It Goes" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142).* Not to be confused with Manplanet, Red Planet is a quirky bunch that plays Cars-influenced Power Pop. Song titles like "Goth Girl," "Wrecking Balls and Cannonballs" and "Days Over You" ought to give some hints as to what the band sounds like, while the *Speak and Spell*-emulating design of the album's booklet will tell you which era these guys are from. Even if there a few clunkers on here—as there were on Let's Degenerate—I approve of Red Planet 100%. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Rubber Gun "Grease Up!" *(Knock Out, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany).* Rubber Gun vibrantly bounce their way through a dashing eruption of spirited, good-time, '77-style Punk Rock that's born out of a few pints of ale and a feverish desire to romp the night away. The feisty, uplifting she-wolf vocals sound like a scientific experiment in crossbreeding voice ranges, fusing Pauline Murray of Penetration with Annie Lennox during her illustrious tenure with The Tourists. There's a captivating variety of fiery, smokin'-hot riffs of the likes which haven't been heard since Johnny Thunders and Steve Jones honed their highly skilled six-stringed chops in the 1970s. And the thunderously precise rhythm section, packing loads of turbulent tornado-like fury, is tighter than a newborn puppy dog's ass. *Grease Up!* is a frenetic, high-energy outpouring of pure, unrefined sonic surliness that's sure to stoke the ever-brightening flames of youthful rebellion within us all. (CD)-**Moser**

The Rumblers "Hold On Tight" *(Knock Out, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany).* The revved-up atomic fury of The Rumblers is nothing short of butt-kickin' Punkabilly craziness at its leanest, meanest, and most intimidating. It's robust and rowdy Rock n' Roll grit the way the devil intended it to be, a psycho-sonic swirl of mayhem, madness, and manly, whiskey-sloshed bravado. Imagine Social Distortion and The Reverend Horton Heat stomping all-out shit on a rickety, ramshackle honky-tonk stage and mercilessly shaking the shingles off the roof with a blistering set of balls-out, hell-raising rave-ups. Whoo-doggy, the swaggering jailhouse-bred sounds of The Rumblers are covered head to toe in a thick sheen of sin, grease, heartbreak, tattoos, and the depraved, hard-luck bleakness of hustling for a buck and a dime in grim and sleazy pool halls on the wrong side of town. *Hold On Tight* is a wildly walloping, savagely wailing release that ruthlessly opens up a can of audio whup-ass and knocks the listener for a loop before he or she ever knows what hit them. Damn, no wonder my ears are relentlessly ringing, my head's a-pounding somethin' fierce, and I'm seeing stars aplenty! (CD)-**Moser**

Sad State of Affairs *(Spook City, POB 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* Members of Carry On and Right Brigade procure a nasty dose of brawny Hardcore hammering. Midtempo murk elicits fond memories of the low-end disorder of Cleveland greats Ringworm and (early) Integrity on this six song EP. Rhythmic E-chord upheaval doused with metallic leads and surly howls galore. Those who crave a worthy testament to the dark, manifestly negative midwestern Hardcore of yore need look no further. (CD)-**Ramek**

Safety In Numbers "In the Key of D" *(Triple Crown, 331 West 57th St. #472, New York, NY 10019).* A recurring side-project featuring members of Hot Rod Circuit and The Get Up Kids, it seems like Safety In Numbers is Andy Jackson's chance to really rock out. The disc changes gears a lot between Punk pop and more aggressive fare, but as with most things that Triple Crown Records touches, it's quality. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Safes "Boogie Woogie Rumble" *(Pro-Vel, POB 5182, St. Louis, MO 63139).* This one was a surprise. Three brothers named O'Malley from Chicago bashing out a five song Hard Rock EP. Catchy hooks, heavy riffs, and a good recording job done by Jim Diamond of Dirtbombs fame who also recorded White Stripes first album. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Sahara Hotnights "Kiss and Tell" (*BMG, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036*). There's something very Runaways about the cover of this CD. Musically, it sounds like the Runaways with a dash of Go-Gos. The best part is, they're four beautiful Swedish women. Moan. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Scatter the Ashes *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* Scatter the Ashes have constructed a very lofty album. Part Alternative Rock, part Mr. Bungle, part punk, part Butthole Surfers (and probably part 10 other things you could pick out after several serious listens), combine on this debut album that literally does not fit into any of those pre-conceived little genres people like to name; there is too much going on here. Scatter the Ashes isn't Screamo or Metalcore, but Punk would also be too limited a term. The album contains the diverse approach that we witnessed on Today Is the Day's debut *Supernova*, but lacks the acidic delivery of that masterpiece. The vocals at times have a Dag Nasty feel when they are cleanly sung, but even be Tears For Fears. Like I said, this is a lofty achievement for a band so new, and I think they did a damn good job putting it together. (CD)-**Myk**

School For Heroes "Arrivals/Departures" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27449).* I'm a big supporter of the Tribunal label. I've liked just about every band they've released to date that I've heard, until now. Wow, is this band boring! The vocals aren't Screamo, or even Emo for that matter; they have this sort of whiney '80's thing going on. He has some range, but it sounds like he listened to too much Morrissey and Depeche Mode growing up and couldn't decide what direction to go in. The music has a lot of the Walter Schreifels school of guitar playing going on, but it's not Walter, just someone trying to sound like him. The drumming is decent enough, but I heard very little that stuck out, which isn't good either. This is just one of those bands that just fades into a swarm of other non descript acts which will always be "okay". (CD)-**Myk**

Scumdrunk "Delirium Tremens" *(Akhenation, 1025 Hamilton St., Philadelphia, PA 19123).* My, what a seething auditory temper tantrum this is! Scumdrunk delivers a big, ballsy slab of thundering Metal mayhem that sounds uncannily like the monstrous, stampeding roar of the four horsemen of the apocalypse sonically careening out of a flame-engulfed pit of thick, breath-smothering wickedness. The demonically altered vocalist grunts and screams like a rabid bulldog who's smoked one too many sticks of dynamite, and the high-intensity instrumentation is a nuclear witch's brew of dark, doom-heavy rhythms and relentless, hard-hitting percussion attacks. Good God, talk about a loud and unholy assault on the auditory senses! I gotta go change my underpants now, because I just shit myself silly due to the bone-crushing Metal wrath of Scumdrunk. (CD)-**Moser**

The Sex Maniacs "Mean As Hell" *(Manic Ride, POB 12593, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* Ex-Hardcore kids playing Rock and Roll….sounds like a bit of a cliché already, but The Sex Maniacs do a pretty good job integrating Rose Tattoo-style flair with some ripping chord progressions yanked straight from Black Flag's *Nervous Breakdown* EP. The end result is a style that falls roughly between the two above-mentioned parties, although the sound here is neither as bombastic as the former nor as nihilistic as the latter. Still, a knack for hooks and a tolerable vocal delivery that is neither wimpy croon nor gravel-charred howl (again, falling somewhere between the two) ensures a consistent effort, replete with snotty, hipper than-thou rants and axe wails galore. If the image and lyrical scheme embraced by this band is one dimensional, the end result is still infinitely more rocking (and relevant) than the "emotive" Pop/Rock sometimes passing for Hardcore nowadays. (CD)-**Ramek**

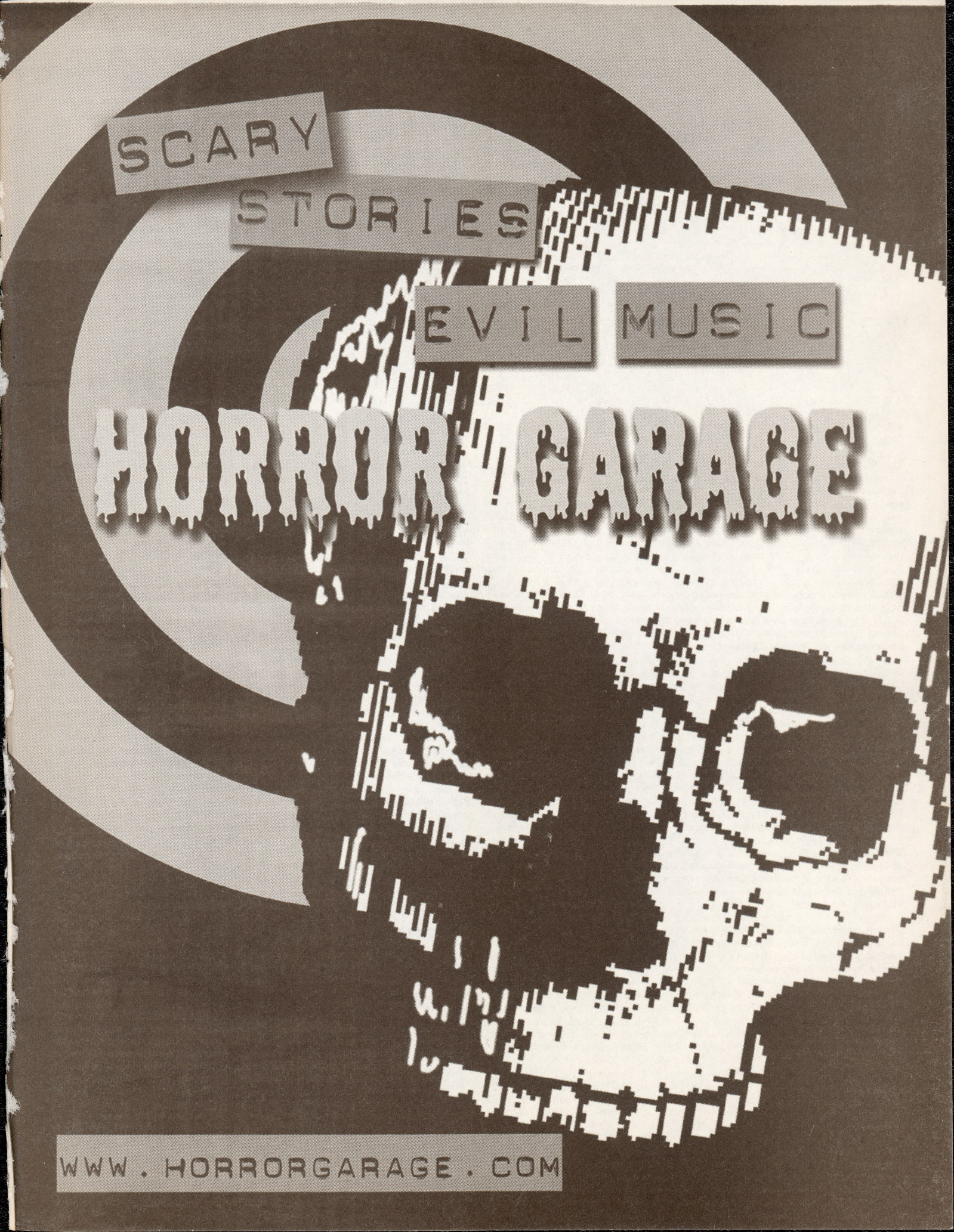
The Shazam "Tomorrow the World" *(Not Lame, POB 2266, Ft. Collins, CO 80522).* Imagine, if you will, Marc Bolan, Joe Walsh, Tom Petty, Cheap Trick, and Wings joining forces with Weezer and Matthew Sweet and then hungrily gulping a colorful array of pills before giddily hopping into a time machine that transports them back to the year of amplified jubilance 1973. In the ensuing transmogrification, The Shazam are birthed in a radiant burst of sheer aural splendor where bell bottoms, day-glo rainbows, and sparkly glitter dust are the only necessities in life. Groovy, man! If ya dig your sounds dipped deep into an effervescent swirl of Power Pop crunchiness with plenty of rockin' Boogie swagger, then *Tomorrow the World* is definitely your cup of Kool-Aid. So turn it up, and let the good times roll! (CD)-**Moser**

Sin City Six "Home of the Brave" *(Locomotive, 439 South Broad St., Suite 208, Trenton, NJ 08611).* I believe these guys are from Spain, which I don't see to much of. They play Rock n' Roll. There is some Cramps in here, some Hellacopters, and a little bit of Southern drawl. This is a good record. I've really enjoyed it all three times I've listened to it, but it is very nondescript; if you don't continue to look at the cover, you'll forget who it is. There is no true standout track, either good or bad. It's just a good record. While I wouldn't tell anyone to **not** check this out, it's not on my priority recommendation list either. If you like the current Rock scene with bands like Brought Low, Clutch, ATP, etc you will enjoy this, you just won't feel compelled to put it on either. (CD)-**Myk**

Skew Whiff "Taedium Vitae" (*Life Is Abuse, POB 20524, Oakland, CA 94620*). Unlike most Crusty bands I hear these days who can barely even play their instruments (let alone the Slayer riffs they cop), Skew Whiff play with a refreshing technical prowess. Hopefully, more Crusties take note. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Slumlords *(Perfect Victim, POB 52084, Boston, MA 02205).* The Slumlords certainly live up (down?) to their name—they play dirty rat-infested Street Punk, heavy enough for Hardcore fans but anthemic enough for the Oi! kids. Somehow they manage to retain their integrity while simultaneously "keeping it real" and not resorting to overtired clichés. It's not easy to do, and I give them credit for doing it. And kicking ass. Now, where's my beer? Arrrrgh! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Sonic Youth *"Sonic Nurse" (DGC, 2220 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90404).* After 15 albums Sonic Youth make it look almost too easy. *Sonic Nurse* showcases the one time Gr*nge elder statesmen as they seemingly cakewalk through 10 brand new tunes. The comfortable quality of the avant Jazz-like jam surroundings here makes for an album that lacks many moments of dynamic interest. The slowly strummed guitar stylings juxtaposed against segues of free Jazz-flavored interludes captured in songs like "Dripping Dream" and "Peace Attack" continue an approach that was last touched upon with 2002`s *Murray Street.* Aside from "Unmade Bed," where the band challenges its use of harmonics and percussion, *Sonic Nurse* does little to break new ground here, giving credence to the idea that Sonic Youth has become the Gr*nge generation`s version of The Grateful Dead. This latest effort will strictly appeal to Sonic Youth purists. (CD)-**Andriani**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Sounds Like Violence "The Pistol" *(Deep Elm, POB. 36939 Charlotte, NC 28236-6939).* At first the shaky a capella vocals sound like fingernails on a chalkboard , but once the music comes in, they sort of fit. These guys remind me of Hot Rod Circuit, but with the wacky vocals. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Space Robot Scientists "Aggro Disco" *(www.spacerobotscientists.com).* The third release from this local favorite picks up exactly where previous efforts left off. This is an excellent mix of dark, keyboard driven-New Wave and early Punk Rock/Modern Rock faves like Talking Heads and PiL. This six song EP has the potential to turn the Scientists from one of LI's best-kept secrets into a household name, at least in indie circles. (CD)-**McClernon**

SPF1000 "Witchhunt" *(Dark Future, POB 577, Woodland Hills, CA 91365).* Electro horror? I'm not exactly sure what to call this, but it sounds a boatload like Marilyn Manson with more keyboards and electronic effects. David's vocals are excellent on this album and the opening track, "Horror Show," is beyond catchy. Manson is played out and an afterthought at this point, but this album (despite the stupid name, sorry) is a far more dangerous venture, especially when combining the disciplines which can always be a risky venture. All you Dark Wave goth hipster clubbers will absolutely love this: Manson, a bit of NIN, and even a little Nitzer Ebb thrown in make this a quality release, especially for something independent. (CD)-**Myk**

Steve Burns "Songs for Dust Mites" (*PIAS America, www.piasamerica.com*). Whoa. Steve Burns was the original *Blue's Clues* guy—remember him? Now he's recording Psychedelic Electro Pop with members of the Flaming Lips. Like I said, whoa. Stylistically, I have nothing to compare this CD to. Steve's songs are incredibly passionate and original, and quite frankly, I'm shocked. This is some of the best Adult Contemporary/Progressive Radio-style music I've ever heard. I wish Steve all the best with his new career —he's very talented. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Steve Burns "Songs For Dustmites" *(PIAS America, www.piasamerica.com).* Steve Burns was "the guy" on Nickelodeon's *Blues Clues*, but "the guy" has moved on and made a serious singer-songwriter album with members of The Flaming Lips. Naturally, the presence of those Lips and producer Dave Fridmann brings about eccentricity and unique production, although the hard-to-interpret lyrics are courtesy of Burns. This is a worthwhile release, but obviously not for those craving a high-energy Punk Rock disc. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Steve Turner "Searching For Melody" *(Roslyn, 4509 Interlake Ave. N #201, Seattle, WA 98103).*. Yes, this is Steve Turner from Mudhoney, and yes, this is his solo album, and yes it's a goddamn classic. Do n't expect one ounce of Mudhoney here; think Folk Punk (for lack of a better term) done in a very tasteful way. Songs of self -evaluation, drug abuse, drunkenness, and depression fill this album. Anyone that is over 21 and occupies a barstool at least twice a week should own this album. I must say, this is the best album I've purchased in quite some time. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Stiff Little Fingers "Guitar and Drum" (*Kung Fu, POB 38009, Hollywood, CA 90038*). I can't speak for the old Stiff Little Fingers catalog (certain things I read kept me away), but this CD sounds like a couple of old farts trying to pander to the New School of Punk Rock. Is that Bruce Foxton from the Jam on bass? No matter, it's just too upbeat and happy for my tastes. Nauseatingly so. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Stray Bullets "…The Slings and Arrows of Outrageous Fortune…" *(Fork In Hand, POB 230023, Boston, MA 02123).* Ehh, this doesn't do much for me. For the most part, it's an average blend of Ska and Punk with a vocalist who delivers the lyrics in a quasi Hip-Hop style, followed by gang vocals in the choruses. Imagine if Biohazard decided to get down and skank. Yeah—I didn't think you'd want to picture that. The lyrics reflect the plight of the working class and seem genuine (except when he starts singing about love and questioning this girl if she'll ever love a punk), if not a tad clichéd. There are a few moments on this disc where everything seems to click, but those moments are few and far between, and not enough for me to suggest purchasing this. (CD)-**McClernon**

Strike Anywhere "Exit English" *(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd, Wilmington, DE 19810).* Of those up and coming melodic punk bands that have sought to retain some semblance of integrity by clinging steadfast to their activist roots, there are none more deserving of acclaim than Strike Anywhere. Still, I cannot get over the progressively tepid, radio-friendly shift in sound they have undertaken with each subsequent release. The mediocrity of their hook-strewn format is reminiscent of the many MTV-bound acts vying for fame and fortune, and marks a noticeable departure from their comparatively raw origins. In listening to Strike Anywhere's better moments, I am reminded of the impassioned rage wielded by an earlier incarnation of the band, the remarkable Inquisition, who combined furious Hardcore Punk drive with an excellent melodic sensibility. Strike Anywhere pale in comparison to this earlier project. True to form, the band's latest offering, entitled *Exit English*, is both their most saccharine and their most forgettable. Those in search of mediocre Pop Punk look no further.(CD)-**Ramek**

Suffering and the Hideous Thieves "Rats In Heaven" *(Lujo, 3209 Jennie Dr., Morgan City, Los Angeles, CA).* This is an interesting band, or project, rather. There are over 10 people contributing musically to this album alone. It's not often that a Rock band could do this and actually pull it off. Not-so-ordinary instruments include: violins, Irish flutes, accordions, and yes, a saw! One track that really stood out was "There's Nothing More Beautiful Than Loving You" The music is intricate and wonderfully orchestrated while the lyrics are about fucking a girl to death. It's beautiful! (CD)-**Cain**

The Sunday Drunks "On the Prowl" (*Dead Beat, POB 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078*). The Sunday Drunks are a Texas band who must listen to the New York Dolls and the Heartbreakers non-stop. They do a pretty good imitation, too, but I wish more bands would look to the future and not to the past, if you know what I mean. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Swingin' Utters "Live in a Dive" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690).* The world doesn't need another live album, but if you're going to make one, make sure you follow the Swingin' Utters' example. Twenty-three songs, great recording, a diversified set list, and a comic book are all included in this package. Don't expect any spontaneity though, as everything from the crowd noise, to the stage banter seems well rehearsed. Nevertheless, Swingin' Utters play a good brand of CowPunk that translates well live. This is sure to please fans. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Tarka "Sampler" *(Tarka Music , www.tarkamusic.com).* With a single charting in the UK ("Bimbo In the Limo") and a rave review in *NME*, Tarka could very well be a major label import in the near-future. In the meantime, this adopted son of Keith Richards (literally) plays Emo-free Rock that contains elements of Soul and Pop. For better and worse, no two songs are the same on this 12-song sampler. Some of it resembles Spacehog to my ears, while other parts would cater to Ben Kweller fans. Hopefully an official US release will be forthcoming. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

These Arms are Snakes "The Lion Sleeps When It's Antelope Go Home" *(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd, Wilmington, DE 19810).* Just what the world needs, another At the Drive-In rip off. I must admit though, it's done well. These Arms Ar Snakes fuse snippets of jungle drumbeats, hard guitar riffs, fuzzed-out basslines, foot stomping time breaks, and the occasional vocal wail. I just can't get past the pretentious album title and the awful band name. Fans of Hot Water Music would dig this. (CD)-**Thee Republicrat**

Thunder Pistols (*Pelado, 521 West Wilson #C103, Costa Mesa, CA 92627*). Yay. Another band who can't get their feet out of the Johnny Thunders tar pits. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Tiger Army "Ghost Tigers Rise" *(Hellcat, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* This is Tiger Army's third full-length—13 tracks of dark and brooding, carefully constructed Psychobilly songs. The beats make you move, and the melodies stay in your head no matter how hard you try to get them out. This is Tiger Army's best release yet, proving that even if it's hard to find a stable lineup, you can still make some great music. This is a great album, so check it out. (CD)-**Cain**

Time In Malta "Alone With the Alone" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534).* This is the third release I've heard from this band. The first one, on Escape Artist, was a great record and had a promising start for a young band. The next one was their debut on Equal Vision and I don't know what happen to them; they mellowed out and became monotonous. It was a real disappointment. But, on this new album, the band seems to have regained a lot of what was lost. There are a lot of good heavy parts, but some elements of the last album are injected with great success. It wasn't they didn't write good stuff last time around, it was just an entire album of mellow breakdowns that became ho hum. When you put those same parts into an album that is half Isis and half Hardcore, it really makes an impact. Time In Malta still isn't as powerful as the early days, but they are more diverse and they have managed to do it without becoming a pathetic regurgitated Rock band. This is the kind of band that was considered Emo before it was a classification. (CD)-**Myk**

Time In Malta "Alone With the Alone" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534).* The second full-length from Time In Malta finally delivers the brilliance that was only hinted at on their debut album, *A Second Engine*. Where on the debut they flirted with melodic experimentations and tuneful vocals, *Alone With the Alone* showcases more mature band members that have honed their skills to effortlessly combine Hardcore/Punk music with edgy Metal riffs and melody, keeping one song as interesting as the next. It's the combination of all these elements—along with vocals that when sung sound like a young Dave Smalley— that make Time in Malta one of today's premier Hardcore bands. The lyrics seem to have gotten a bit more political, such as on the opening track "Bare Witness," which seems to be a direct attack on Bush, but other than that, *Alone With the Alone* is exactly the kind of record I expected Time In Malta to follow-up *A Second Engine* with—but even better. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Tim Version "Prohibition Starts Tomorrow" *(The Tim Version, 507 E. Caracas St., Tampa, FL 33603).* Screaming whiskey-gurgling vocals plus a crumbling wall of caterwauling guitar plus a barreling full-steam-ahead rhythm section equals one hell of a noisy, skull-fracturing ruckus in the venerable form of The Tim Version. I hear distinct distortion-drenched shades of Husker Du, Nirvana, and (Young) Pioneers robustly tossed throughout this hurricane-force whirlwind of sound. And there are even oddball hints of The Pogues and their jig-inspiring brand of drunken musical merriment to be found (a couple of folksy acoustic numbers are thrown into the mix to give the listener's ears a brief respite from the torrential deluge of persistent amplified insanity). All in all, The Tim Version gloriously rocks with a fervent passion not heard in many a moon. My ears are wigglin' with glee, and my feet just can't quit euphorically stompin', so there ya go! (CD)-**Moser**

Tom Mabe "A Wake-Up Call For Telemarketers" *(Megaforce, POB 1955, New York, NY 10113).* Oh man, this is absolutely one of the funniest slices of phone-prank tomfoolery that I've ever in my life heard! Tom Mabe irreverently targets telemarketers and their persistent, annoying phone calls by turning the tables on them and being as obnoxious, unruly, confrontational, and wry as humanly possible. Mr. Mabe has an obvious personal vendetta against telemarketers (don't we all?!), and he pulls it off with the utmost of

sarcastic humor and spontaneous wit. Whether it's insurance companies, major credit card corporations, national telephone service providers, or local newspaper subscription solicitors, nothing is sacred as Tom eloquently wreaks a gut-tickling array of verbal havoc on the unsuspecting victims at hand. I especially enjoy the hilarious, smart-ass segment where Tom prank calls various hotel guests attending a telemarketing convention and gives them a bitter taste of their own medicine in the wee, early hours of the morning. A couple of live comedic spiels follow, as well as a soulful, Lionel Richie-style ballad about the fine art of digging for boogers. Uncontrollable fits of tearful laughter are the order for the day when Tom Mabe is goofing poetic at the expense of telemarketers everywhere. (CD)-**Moser**

Thee Fine Lines *(Licorice Tree, POB 92783, Austin, TX 78709)*. Since they hail from the sticks and hollows of Springfield, Missouri, you wouldn't think that Thee Fine Lines would be musically stirring up a ruckus with an entire album's worth of the most ferocious, bare-boned Garage Rock sounds to be found this side of Sweden. But ya better give it a second thought, bub! Noisy and sightly bassist/vocalist Trista Winn and brothers Justin and Jason Kearbey (guitar/vocals and drums respectively) have managed to unleash a lo-fi, distortion-laden firestorm of beastly, Neanderthal-like cave-stomp music that's as breath-taking and infectious as it is spastic and hard-hitting. Crunchy and powerful Kinks-style riffs are met with a torrential hail of drunkenly slurred vocals and savage, sex-charged rhythms. My pick hit would have to be "Something Right" with its seductive, gritty beat that possesses the same chord progression as "Louie, Louie" and "Hang On, Sloopy," though distinctly more primitive and uncivilized. Thee Fine Lines tackle their songs with a raw, no-frills approach that takes the listener for an electrifying, bone-rattling ride of a lifetime. Fourteen songs propelled by three chords, a bucketful of sweat, and a bulging overload of primal energy levels. Who could possibly ask for anything more? (CD)-**Moser**

The Transplants "Police State" (*Bacchus Archives, POB 1975, Burbank, CA 91507*). Let me just take a moment to say, "Thank you Bacchus Archives for existing and releasing recorded material from great bands who would otherwise fade into obscurity." The Transplants were a pre-Hardcore Boston Punk band. This CD compiles demos and live recordings made during the band's brief 1976-1979 existence. Musically, they remind me of the pre-Hardcore LA Punk in their unique not-give-a-fuck-I'm-rockin'-out approach, yet there is an underlying Boston thing about them. And check out the long hair and beard on vocalist Jordan Kratz. Now THAT's Punk Rock! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Treephort "Enchanted Forest" *(Springman, POB 2043, Cupertino, CA 95015-2043)*. I almost turned this off after the first 15 seconds because the first song— clocking in at 50 seconds total—was absolutely awful. But I let it play out and I'm pretty happy I did. After the initial disaster, what you get is some sloppily played, yet catchy, Pop Punk similar to what the early Lookout bands were all about. Each song incorporates the goofiness of the Dead Milkmen with the melody of the Mr. T Experience, with a vocalist that sounds eerily like Dr. Frank himself. The band really needs to stay away from abortions like "The Lawsuit About to Happen," since their strongest selling point is that they know a good hook when they write it, and execute it well, even making a decent tune out of that lousy Annie Lennox song from years ago, "Constant Craving." Your world won't be changed by this CD, but it's a nice change of pace to hear a band that doesn't themselves seriously at all. (CD)-**McClernon**

True Love "I Was Accident" *(Not Lame, POB 2266, Ft. Collins, CO 80522)*. True Love is the sound of a swarm of fluttering butterflies being dipped into a swirling vat of multi-colored candy syrup and then being ravenously eaten by a horde of glittery, sparkle-laden Power Pop messiahs. The instrumentation is majestic and shimmering and addictive and all things perfect and endearing to the ears. The vocals possess an otherworldly elegance as if Paul McCartney and Elvis Costello were conjoined at birth and have no desire in the very least of ever becoming separated. Lots of intricate, soaring harmonies magically meander throughout the mix, inspiring flesh-tingling smiles galore and an innocent aura of childlike awe. I haven't had this much fun since I discovered the fine art of delicately touching a woman in all the right places. Yum-yum good! (CD)-**Moser**

Twelve Tribes "The Rebirth of Tragedy" *(Ferret, 167 Wayne St. #409, Jersey City, NJ 07302)*. Upon first listening to this album, it appears that Ferret has one of their most commercially viable releases to date. At times the vocals remind me of Chaka from Orange 9MM (yeah, I know he was in Burn, but these songs sound like O9mm). At times the singer strikes me as sounding like Mike Patton on the Dillinger Escape Plan EP, and other times he even sounds like Howard Jones from Killswitch Engage. The music is a very complicated mix of heavy influences ranging from Thursday, to Strife, to Isis, and there are even some European Metal riffs. This is not your typical Hardcore kickboxing soundtrack; it also isn't a strictly Math Rock style album either. There is a lot to absorb, but eventually this could be the kind of record that pushes Screamo and Metalcore bands to make more melodic, but powerful albums. (CD)-**Myk**

Unearth "The Oncoming Storm" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St., PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065-2793)*. When I was nine years old, I used to hang out at the handball courts. I thought the kids with the long hair and denim jackets with Iron Maiden, Metallica and Venom back patches were cool as shit. Being that I was a little shit, I had to prove to these guy that I was no pussy; so I would smoke cigarettes, steal candy from 7-11, vandalize the high school, etc.. Anyway, one day I stole a butterfly knife from my sister's wussy boyfriend (he listened to Ratt, Cinderella, etc.) and I brought the knife to the handball courts. I didn't know what I would do with that knife, but, I knew I would do something cool that would prove I was no pussy. I road my Sigma bike into the gated court, stared at the "Metallica Rules!" mural on the wall, and proceeded to stab the shit out of one the Asian handball player's bicycle tire. Everyone stopped. The young Asian man looked at me, then started charging. I quickly kicked up my kickstand and peddled like I was in the Tour de France. Even though I was on a bike, he was right behind me the entire time, grabbing at my shirt until I weaseled my way off the track by riding down steep stairs at a very fast speed. While I was being chased I had a certain sound in my head that told me, "Pedal! Pedal! Pedal!" I've never heard anything close to this until now, with Unearths latest. It has lots of chugga chugga guitars, high squealing sounds, strong dynamics, badass screams, solos, fast drums, harmonics...basically, it's a mighty fine Metal album. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Unearth "The Oncoming Storm" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. Suite 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. If this is the storm that is rolling in from the coast, stockpile food, get low, and look the fuck out. Unearth's new disc showcases a band that deserves to be mentioned in the same breath as other noteworthy Metal bands. The guitar playing of Ken Suzi and Buzz McGrath has matured and advanced even more, putting the guitar duo almost on par with the work of Shadows Fall guitarists Matthew Bachand and Jonathan Donais. Lyrically, Trevor Phipps discuses the general idea that, as humans, we're headed towards a dark and bleak future if we continue on our current course. His words touch on war, worshiping false idols, and the environment. "Zombie Autopilot" has a great '80's feel to the riff, and the band re-recorded "Endless," a song that features one of the best breakdowns (I really don't like that word but I really have to use it) in any song I can think of. If you liked *The Stings of Conscience, The Oncoming Storm* is even better. The recording itself is great, thanks to the assistance of the always-busy producer Adam Dutkiewicz. Heavy music enthusiasts can certainly embrace this disc. (**CD)-KevTV**

Unearth "The Oncoming Storm" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. I've been trumpeting this band's arrival ever since their first album on Eulogy came out. Unearth has slowly ascended to the top of the Metal scene including procuring a record deal with Metal Blade Records. This is the first album from that deal, and like As I Lay Dying and Black Dahlia Murder before them, Unearth will prove that Metal Blade is still as viable as they were when they signed bands like Metallica, Slayer and Voi Vod. Crushing guitar riffs mix with a far-reaching vocal capacity to sing, but also scream and growl. Unearth has managed this ascent without sounding like a clone Swedish band; they have a lot of Hardcore and old Thrash influences, and I would guess spend a lot of time listening to Florida style Death Metal ala Death and Deicide. There are song structures on this album that would make Testament blush and old timers reminisce about when Metal Church was good. But of course, no one would be remiss in thinking that Unearth could have been on Combat at some point around the time that Ludichrist and the Crumbsuckers were putting out albums either. This is a band that has taken all before and used what they have learned today to put together the next generation of Metal. Some day my son will look back and say "I remember when the first Unearth came out" when talking about some new album I will be too old to even understand. (CD)-**Myk**

V/A "Advanced Calculus" *(These Bricks Re Mine, 5001 Baum Blvd, Suite 630, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)*. This is a double CD of live recordings of some eclectic underground Pittsburgh bands recorded live for the radio show Advanced Calculus. You can check out some of the tunes @ http://advcalc.com . (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

V/A "NYHC: Where the Vile Things Are" *(NGS, POB 334, Westmont, IL 60559)*. It don't get any more grisly, furious, and menacing than New York-bred Hardcore, and all the proof in the pudding is noisily contained within the 17 songs comprising this brutally bruising package. Four bands (Condition, Carnage Krew, Moral Terror, and Pledge of Resistance) let the amplified rage simmer, seethe, and vigorously spurt forth in a frenzied, fast-paced presentation of sweat, anger, and manic mega-watt sonic expression. Approach with extreme caution if your ears are delicate, effeminate, or likely to wilt under excessive auditory pressure. (CD)-**Moser**

V/A "Punk For Life Volume One" (*Run and Hide, POB 35094, Philadelphia, PA 19128*). Here we have a compilation of Punk Rock ranging from Street Punk to Hardcore Punk to Thrash. Some bands you may know include (but are not limited to): Kill Your Idols, MDC and Minor Disturbance. The other bands you'll just have to hear for yourself. It's worth it, trust me! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

V/A "Punk-O-Rama Vol. 9" *(Epitaph, 2798, Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. The ninth installment (Jeez, where the hell have I been for the previous, like, seven volumes?) in the on-going Punk-O-Rama series documents the ever-revolving Epitaph roster, and after listening to all 24 tracks, I've concluded that this has to be the most eclectic roster the label has come up with thus far, for better or worse. This comp runs the musicical spectrum, from Punk to Rock n' Roll/Rockabilly to Emo to even Hip-Hop (Atmosphere and Eyedea & Abilities). And while I can say that there are definitely some clunkers (Motion City Soundtrack, Rancid, Error, and 1208 tracks immediately spring to mind), there are also some terrific tunes contributed by Dropkick Murphys, the Weakerthans, Hot Water Music, Division of Laura Lee, Tiger Army, and the Bouncing Souls. While I can't name every band

(due to laziness and space restrictions), I can assure you that there is something for everyone on this album. (CD)-**McClernon**

V/A "Shakin' In My Boots: A Texas Rock N' Roll Compilation" *(Licorice Tree, POB 92783, Austin, TX 78709).* Stoner Rock, Street Rock, Garage Rock, Southern Rock...however you want to classify some of the songs on this platter, they're all good. Standout bands are The Crack Pipes, McLemore Street, 00 Spies, The Ugly Beats, and The Stepbrothers. If you like lead and slide guitars, organs and reverb, then you should listen to this. (CD)- **Cyst Vicious**

V/A "Shielded by Death Volume 3: Exit Stage West" (*Bacchus Archives, POB 1975, Burbank, CA 91507*). In the spirit of the *Killed By Death* series, Bacchus Archives brings us a collection of unheard Connecticut /Massachusetts Punk Rock, '78 to '81. This CD actually plays like an excellent *Killed By Death* volume, ranging from Hardcore to Punk Rock to New Wave. Did you know that Connecticut had an answer to Black Flag called the Target Cells? Buy this!. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

V/A "Warped Tour 2004 Compilation" (*SideOneDummy, POB 2350, Los Angeles, CA 90078*). Two discs and 50 tracks featuring "the single" from most of the bands playing the Tour this summer. This is obviously meant as a gateway release that includes Simple Plan, Bad Religion, From Autumn to Ashes, Pennywise and...well, you get the point. Good one-time listening. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

V/A Alkaline Trio / One Man Army "BYO Split Series Volume 5" *(BYO, POB 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067).* Like a cloud of melodic honey bees, Alkaline Trio swarms out of the stereo speakers and buzzes their way straight into the luxurious heart of man. Theirs is the life-enriching Pop Punk sound of nature exploding into an intricate array of ornate rhythms, exquisite harmonies, catchy melodies, and riveting, infectious hooks. Heavenly seduction of the ears seems to be Alkaline Trio's irresistible mode of operandi. One Man Army, on the other hand, is the disruptive sonic equivalent of a swift, heavily booted kick in the ass. Their half of this wondrously inspiring 12-tune split effort is a rhythmically robust outpouring of *Clockwork Orange*-style Pub Punk that should be heartily ingested with several pints of lukewarm Guinness. Indeed, One Man Army musically holds their end together with a sturdy length of chain comprised of safety pins, razor blades, broken bottles, and a gruff, bad-boy demeanor. So now it's time to give the fine folks at BYO Records a standing ovation for once again bringing two musically unique bands together who possess an obvious common cause: grandly rockin' it Punk style. (CD)-**Moser**

V/A Hidari Mae / Speed Not Steel *(Lujo, 3209 Jennie Dr., Morgan City, LA 70380).* This release is a double CD EP, something I don't think I've ever seen. Hidari Mae is the first disc, showcasing a somber sound, featuring both male and female vocals. "Interim" reminds me a little of the slower moments on Jimmy Eat World's *Clarity* disc. Synthesizer, piano, and theremin are some of the instruments that accompany the soft drumming and light piano and guitars. Hidari Mae give off a very spacious and drifting sound. The Speed Not Steel EP is a bit livelier. "Anything Isn't Everything" has a Ben Folds Five sort-of feel in terms of structure, but the song itself is not piano driven, relying instead on guitar and a well-played violin. "Floating" is my favorite song of both EPs, featuring a more pronounced guitar overlaid with piano, it's the most full and rich song of the collection. Both bands have a relaxed feel, but I'd see Speed Not Steel getting the upper hand if it was a contest between the two. (CD)-**KevTV**

V/A Kill Your Idols/ Crime In Stereo "Split" *(Blackout!, POB 610, Hoboken, NJ 07030)* This is a six song split from two of Long Island's finest. Two originals and a cover of "Time Don't Heal A Thing" by Sheer Terror are dished out by Kill Your Idols. The cover is downright mean sounding, as KYI really went for trying to reproduce that Sheer Terror sound. The originals are much more lighthearted in musical tone, if not lyrically. Crime In Stereo is a newer band but it sounds like they could have been one of the first couple of releases from Blackout! records in the late '80s. Their sound is a cross between New York Hardcore and a DC/ early Dischord, and the vocalist is really suited to it as well. This is my first exposure to this band, and I am really impressed, as the songs are good and the recording is excellent, and it's even more enlightening to find a newer band that isn't crying in their vegan milk in the corner. These guys are the real deal. (CD)-**Myk**

V/A Paradox UK / Sanity Assassins "The Best of" *(Step-1, POB 21, Tenterden, Kent TN30 7ZZ, UK).* Both Paradox UK and Sanity Assassins flail all over thundering tarnation in a fitful flurry of apocalyptic Street Punk angst tinged with a fiery, metallic Hardcore edge. Paradox UK (hailing from Britain across the sea, of course) and Sanity Assassins (from yonder colonial state of Connecticut, USA) shared the same menacing, napalm-growling vocalist at one time or other, and this cacophonously disruptive collection culls various gut-pummeling tracks from an inspiring array of each band's vinyl releases from the 1990s. If a nuclear holocaust were ever set to music, it'd assuredly brim with the same unrelenting savage fury unleashed within this disc. Indeed, it's an auditory temper tantrum running rampant and wild in a hostile, flame-scorched environment of anarchy, insurrection, mass rioting, and random acts of impassioned violence. For those of you seeking a much-needed change for the better within today's doom-practicing political infrastructure, I suggest you give this loudly raging CD a listen and then aggressively smash "the system" to bits with a barrage of bricks, baseball bats, and Molotov cocktails. Revolt, kiddies, revolt! (CD)-**Moser**

V/A The Vanishing/Sixteens (*Gold Standard Laboratories, POB 65091, Los Angeles, CA 90065*). Whether you call it Goth or Death Rock or Post Punk is completely irrelevant. What matters is that the bands invading these genres are as unique and exciting as the original outcropping of bands 25 years ago. Take this four song 12" EP, for example. Instead of rehashing worn ideas of the past, both the Vanishing and the Sixteens look to the future for inspiration, creating a genre all their own. I shall refer to it as CyberDeath from now on—dark electro-driven music for random sexual encounters. (12")-**chuck.foster**

V/A The VAZ/Seawhores Saga "Vazzed In A Sea of Whores" (*Essay, 1021 S Walnut St, Bloomington, IN 47401*). VAZ is the combined talents of Apollo Liftoff and Deft Garlands, aka Paul Erickson and Jeff Mooridian, the powerhouse rhythm section of Midwestern '90's Noise Punk heavyweights Hammerhead. Eschewing the hard-hitting pounding of the past, they've gone in a more experimental direction, producing dark moody psychedelic soundscapes akin to early Chrome. Seawhores are like an instrumental version of the Butthole Surfers—you never know what may happen next. The three tracks presented here range from Noise Punk to acoustic strangeness to something almost Black Metal. Do yourself a favor and stop listening to the same old shit—buy this CD. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Warlocks "Phoenix" *(Birdman, POB 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050).* The Warlocks elegantly outshine the brightest, sky-splitting super nova with their abundant pleasurable soundscapes in the tripped-out tradition of Spacemen 3, Hawkwind, and "Interstellar Overdrive"-era Pink Floyd. A sprightly Pop presence radiantly tingles throughout the ethereal, droning layers of fuzz-heavy instrumentation while stoned-immaculate vocals slur in an echo-drenched chamber of majestic isolation. *Phoenix* is a psychedelic, intergalactic auditory orgasm that sends shivers all up and down my spine, and I think I shall never be the same again in either mind or spirit. (CD)-**Moser**

Winds "The Imaginary Direction of Time" *(End, 331 Rio Grande #58, Salt Lake City, UT 84101).* I am one of the world's biggest Arcturus fans, so of course when two members of that band do another project, I am instantly excited about it. This is Winds' third release, but unfortunately, the first album is very hard to come by. What you have here is a band that concentrates on all the Neo-Classical elements that Arcturus hints at, but only toys with the Metal aspects.. Beautiful yet dark at the same time, this is the kind of piece you could understand being translated into Off Broadway. Winds has managed to release an album much in the vein of Trans Siberian Orchestra but without sounding pretentious. This is for only the most adventurous listener; do not be swayed by the fact the band features a member of Mayhem. This could just as easily be released on a label like AFM and those fans may actually be more likely to enjoy this record than the people in the Black Metal scene. Yes, it is that far removed. (CD)-**Myk**

XFilesX "Excruciation" *(Trash Art, POB 725, Providence, RI 02901).* This CD features 21 tracks of Hardcore that quickly remind me of the early Boston days—SSD, PTL Klub—but non-Boston bands like Poison Idea and SFA are also represented here. These guys put the "Hate Core" back in the scene the way it should be. They are pissed at everyone around us, and not so much at each other, but they also despise a lot of what the Hardcore scene has become, mainly stemming back to the it is now us versus us, and not us versus **them**. If your perfect idea of Hardcore is *This Is Boston, Not LA! then* this is a band you absolutely musty check out. (CD)-**Myk**

Yeti "Volume Obliteration Transcendence" (*Life Is Abuse, POB 20524, Oakland, CA 94620*). Yeti make dark Metal-heavy Crust Prog Rock, like King Crimson played by Man Is the Bastard. This album is impressive for its atmospheric qualities alone, never mind the complex song structures and excellent musicianship. Looks like there's hope after all, folks. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Young Heart Attack "Mouthful of Love" *(The Beggars Group, 580 Broadway, Suite 1004, New York, NY 10012).* Well, this release seals it: I need to move my ass down to Texas, 'cause it seems that's where the fucking Rock n' Roll is at! Young Heart Attack is **so** good it almost hurts to listen. Their brand of Rock is the type that instantly puts you in a good mood. It's the type that may not make you wanna break bottles over your head all night, but it'll certainly make you wanna empty 'em and then make out with the hot blond that's been eyeing you all night from the corner of the bar. The dual male/female vocals immediately sink their teeth into savory tracks like "Mouthful of Love" and "Starlite," and don't loosen their grip until the final anthem, "Misty Rowe." If you're a fan of the Riverboat Gamblers or the Gearhead Records roster in general, you'll eat this up. (CD)-**McClernon**

Zeke "'Til the Livin' End" (*Relapse, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082*). Once again, Zeke return with an album chock full o' blistering Motorhead-ish anthems. In characteristic Zeke fashion, the songs assault like a tweaked up boxer on a rampage. Let's get drunk and Rock n' Roll! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

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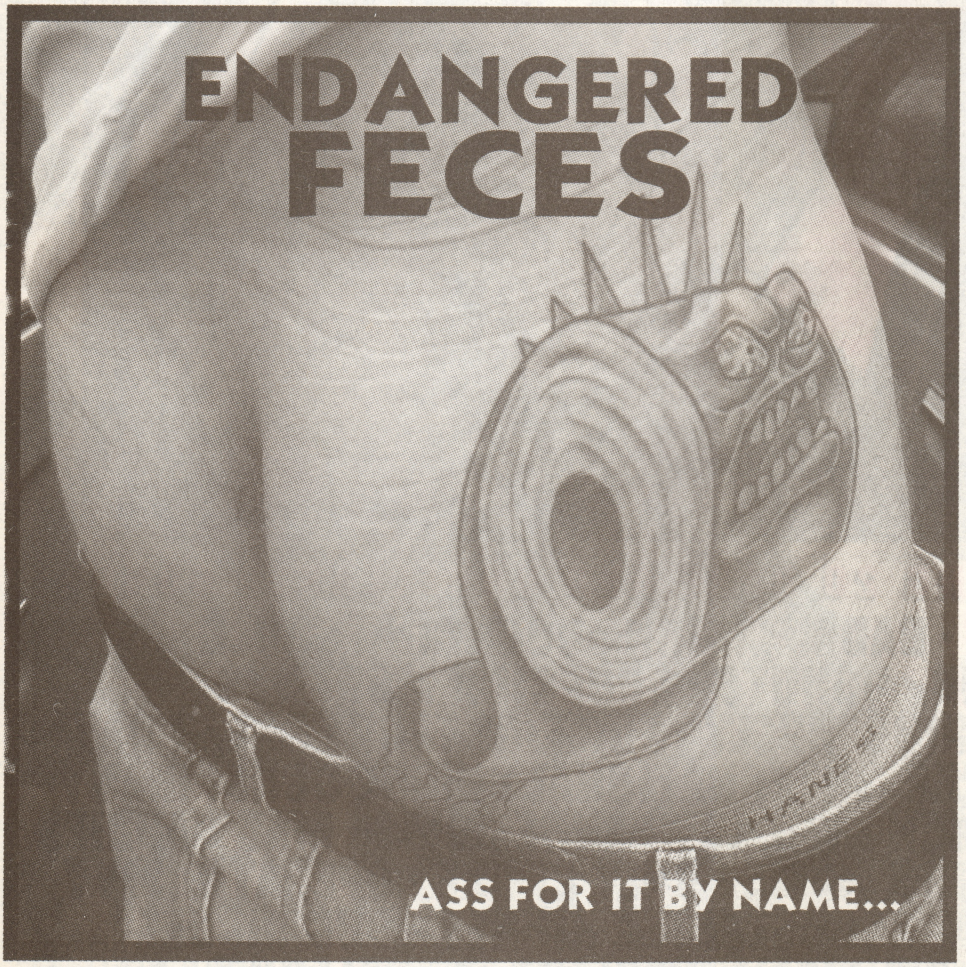

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